THE COBLER of Canterburie.

OR

An inuective against Tarltons *Newes out of Purgatorie.*

A merrier left then a Clownes ligge, and *fitter for Gentlemens humors.*

Published with the coſt of a Dickar of Cow-hides.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

The Coblers Epiſtle to *the Gentlemen Readers.*

A Hall, a Hall Gentlemen) roome for a Cobler, here comes the quainteſt Squire in all Kent; The Cobler of Canterburie, armed with his Aull, his Lingell, and his Laſt, preſents himſelfe a iudiciall Cenſor of other mens writings: but me thinks for my ſawcineſſe, I heare *Apelles* boy crying, *Ne Sutor vltra crepidam.* If I do ſee his maiſter mend the fault in the legge, Ile abide their frumpes, and when he hath done, Ile ſay, this had not been corrected but for the Cobler. Becomes not many a Tinkar a tall Pratler? and haue not men of my trade waded ſo deepe in the ſecrets of Theologie that they haue ſought to correct *Magnificat?* and then (by your leaue Gentlemē) may not the Cobler of Kent, who hath beene the patron of many good companions, and toſt ouer a paire of cards at Trump from morning till night, not to be admitted ſo far as to find fault with *Richard Tarltons newes out of Purgatorie?* Yes, and if he that writ it will not amēd the latchet, Ile on with my night-cap & my ſpectacles, and make him ſhape the legge righter ere I haue done.

I confeſſe tis a Booke, and ſo is the Colliers Iade of Croydon a horſe, as well as the Courtiers Courſer: yet by my faith it hath a faire Title: but if *Diogenes* ſaw it he would cry out as he did againſt *Minda*, ſtop your Cittie that it runne

not out of the gates; and inferre a like inuectiue against the Booke, for that the title containes more then the whole Pamphlet: but yet in faith there is prettie stuffe in it, but vnworthie *Dick Tarltons* humor: somewhere too low for iests, somwhere too high for stile: If I distinguish like a Scholler, Gentlemen thinke that I was borne when the Popes butter-flies were abroade: and it may be some Frier was my father, and the rather I gesse it: for that nature hath wrought that vpon my crowne, that he had on his, by Art: for before I was twentie I had a bald pate. Well howsoeuer, I haue found fault, and therefore I haue attempted to amend it, not in the correcting of his worke, but in setting out one more pleasant, and more full of delightfull tales for all mens humours; except those which are so humorous that they count nothing gratious; but that is too graue. What? a dog hath a day: *Semel in anno ridet Apollo.* Longer liues a merry man then a sad, a Cobler hath lesse cares then a King: and an houre past in honest mirth, is worth a tunne full of melancholy. Why were Tauernes inuented, but to ripen mens wits? And why were tales deuised, but to make men pleasant? Tush, when *Redde rationem* comes, I feare me there will be lesse account to be giuen for honest recreation, then either for the enuious practises that solemne Saturnists ruminate: or for the sundrie schismes the melancholy michers, do publish. If my principles be false, let no man take exceptions, but passe them ouer with a smile: for tis but Coblers Philosophie. But I digresse, and therfore to my booke, wherein are contained the tales that were told in the Barge betweene Billinsgate and Graueſend: imitating herein *old father Chaucer*, who with the like Method set out his Canterbury tales: but as there must be admitted no compare betweene a cup of Darby ale, and a dish of durtie water: So sir *Ieffery Chaucer* is so high aboue my reach, that I take *Noli altum sapere* for a warning; and onely looke at him with honour and reuerence. Here is a gallimaufrie of all sorts, the Gentlemen may finde *Salem*, to fauour their eares with iests, and Clownes plaine Dunstable dogrell to make them laugh,

laugh, while their leather buttens flie off. When the Farmer is set in his chaire turning (in a winterseuening) the crabbe in the fire, here he may heare, how his sonne can read, and when he hath done, laugh while his bellis akes. The old wiues that wedded themselues to the profound histories of *Robin Hood Clim of the Clough*, and worthie Sir *Vsumbras*, may here learne a tale to tell amongst their gossips. Thus haue I sought to feed all mens fancies: which if I do, was it not well done of a Cobler? If I offend, and they thinke there is in it neither rime nor reason, why a Cobler did it, and there's an end.

Farewell from Shop where-soeuer it be.

Robin Good-fellovves Epistle.

A Cobler become a coarector! ho, ho, ho: it was not so when Robin-Goodfellow *was a Ruffler, and helpt the country wenches to grinde their mault: Then gentlemen, the Plough swaine medled with his teame: the Gentleman with his Hounde and his Haulke: the Artificer with his labour: and the Scholler with his booke: euery degree contented him within his limits. But now the world is growne to that passe, that Pierce Plow-man will prie into law, nay into Diuinitie, and his duncerie must needes be doctrine: tush, what of higher powers? what of Vniuersities? the text doth put downe them,* Babes and Sucklings, *and no more. This makes* Robin Good fellow *that was so merrie a spirite of the butterie, to leaue all, and keep himselfe in Purgatorie, for Hospitalitie is so cleane runne out of the countrie, that he needes not now helpe the maides to grinde their mault, for the drinke is so small, that it needs little corne: and if he should helpe them, where he was wont to finde a messe of creame for his labour, scarce get a dish of floate milke. Why, see you not how cranke the Cobler is, that will forsooth correct* Dick Tarltons *doings, a man famous in his life for merrie conceites, and especially for a booke of my publishing? well Gentlemen, if you suffer it, and* Dick Tarlton *pocket it vp without reuenge, or a drie blow at his breech,* Robin Good-fellow *makes a vow, to haunt him in his sleepe: and after his old merrie humor, so to play the knaue with the Cobler, that he shall repent hemedled so far beyonde his latchet: but I will carie my friends these newes to Purgatory, where I know for anger, he will almost breake his taber, and will not rest till he haue reuenged: we will lay both our wits together, to put downe the paltring Cobler, and here I make a vow, either to get the conquest, or else neuer to come in your sight: and to say as I was wont: What, Himp and Hamp? here will I neuer more grinde nor stamp.*

Yours in choller, *Robin Good-fellow.*

THE COBLER of Canterburie.

SItting in the Barge at Billinſgate expecting when the tide would ſerue for Gravel-end, diuerſe paſſengers of all ſorts reſorted thither to go downe: at laſt it began to ebbe, & then they cryed away when I came to ẏ ſtaires though I was reſolued to go downe in a Milk-boat, yet ſeeing what a crew of mad companions went in the Barge and perceiuing by the winde, there was no feare of raine, I ſtept into the Barge and tooke vp my ſeate amongſt the thickeſt: with that the Barge-men put from the ſtaires, and hauing a ſtrong ebbe, becauſe there had much raine water fallen before, they went the more merrily downe, and ſcarce had we gotten beyond Saint Katherines, but that a perrye of winde blewe ſomething loude, that the watermen hoyſt vp ſailes, and laide by their Oares from labour. Being thus vnder Saile going ſo ſmugly downe it made vs all ſo merry, that we fell to chat, ſome of one thing and ſome of another, all of mirth, many of knauery, that if Cato Cenſorius had beene there, he would either haue laughed at their knauiſh Jeſts, or elſe at the confuſion of their prattles, which ſeemed like a very Chaos of ſundry conceites. As thus euery man was ſtriuing to paſſe away the time pleaſantly, a Gen-

tleman puld out of his sleeue, a little pamphlet, and began to reade to himselfe: amongst the rest, my selfe was so bold, as to aske him what booke it was: mary quoth he a foolish toy, called Tarltons newes out of Purgatorie: at this they fell to descanting of the booke some commended it highly, and sayd it was good inuention, and fine tales: tush quoth another, most of them are stolne out of Boccace Decameron: for all that, quoth the third, it is prettie and wittie. As they were thus commending and discommending, there sate by an ancient man that was a Cobler in Caunterburie: Maisters, quoth he, I haue read the booke, and tis indifferent, like a cup of bottle ale, halfe one and halfe the other: but tis not merrie enough for Tarltons vaine, nor stuffed with his fine conceits: therefore it shall passe for a booke and no more. No, no, what say you to old father Chaucer? how like you of his Caunterburie tales? are they not pleasant to delight, and wittie to instruct, and full of conceited learning to shewe the excellency of his wit? All men commend Chaucer, as the father of English Poets, and said, that he shot a shote which many haue aymed at, but neuer reacht to.

Well, quoth the Cobler, now that wee are going to Graues-end, and so (I thinke) most of vs to Canterburie, let vs tell some Tales, to passe away the time till we come off the water, and we will call them Canterburie Tales. To this motion, the whole companie willingly consented, and only they stood vpon this, who should begin: If it be no offence, quoth the Cobler, to other gentlemen that be here, I my selfe will be ring-leader: to this they all agreed, and the Cobler began to settle himselfe: yet before I begin, I will (as neare as I can) describe vnto you what manner of man he was.

The description of the Cobler.

HIs stature was large and tall,
His limbs well set withall.

Of

Of a strong bone and a braod chest,
He was wide and wildsome in the brest.
His forehead hie and a bald pate,
VVell I wot he was a mate
That loued well a bony lasse,
For the clownes eyes were as gray as glasse:
And oft haue I heard my mother say,
The wanton eye is er'e most gray.
He loued well a cup of strong ale,
For his nose was nothing pale:
But his snout and all his face,
Was as red as Ruby or Topace:
A voyce he had cleare and lowd,
And well he gan sing to a crowd.
He was a stout sturdy squire:
And loued weeke day good compire:
Drinke he would with euery man,
In cup, cruze, glasse or kan:
And what euery day he got,
He hoorded vp in the ale-pot,
That all Canterburie gan leere,
To talke of this merry Cobleere:
Therefore now marke me well,
For thus his tale began to tell.

The Cobblers Tale.

Conteining the iests that passed betweene the Prior of Canterbury, and a Smith of Saint Austins.

THE Prior of Canterburie had a conuent of Friars Augustines, that were endued with great liuinges for the King and hee himselfe had great reuenewes, that hee liued like a Potentate, and he was had in great estimation,

throughout all the Citie: Liuing thus at ease, pampred vp with delicates and idlenes, the two Nurses of Lechery, he minded not so much his Booke, but that passing one daye through the stretes, he glaunced his eyes to see where he might find some handsome Trull that might be his paramour: many he saw and many he liked, but at last comming by a Smiths Forge, he spyed a proper tall woman meanly attired, after the powertie of her husband, but of such a beautifull visage, and faire countenance that shee pleased greatly the Priors eye, that he thought her the fairest in all Canterbury: he returned home that way hee went out, because hee would haue another looke to the Smiths wife, and as he passed by, hee gaue her a curtesie for his farewell. Well, home he went to his chamber, and there bethought him of his newe Loue, and cast in his minde a thousand waies how he might come to his purpose: At last, he sent for the Smith to come looke vpon his horse, who very hastily hied him to the Priory, where the Prior welcommed him, and entertained him with great curtesie, killing the Nurse (as the ould Prouerbe is) for the childes sake, and making much of blacke Vulcan for faire Venus sake, the poore Smith very carefully lokt to the horse, and where aught was amisse, amended it: The Prior and all his Couent gaue him great commendations and thankes, and bade him to breakefast, where he had good cheare and store of strong drinke, which made the Smith passing pleasant: as they sate at breakefast, the Prior told him: sith they had made experience of his skill, and that he was cunning about horses, he was content to make him Farrier of the Priory. At this the Smith was very glad: nay more, quoth the Prior because thou shalt haue more gaines out of the Dorter, seeing thy wife is a good cleanly woman, she shall be Landresse for me, and the whole Couent. The Smith hearing this, perceiued by the weathercocke, which way the winde blew, shakt the heade, and began to smile, the Pri-

or demanded of him why he laught? mary sir, quoth hee, seeing we are at meate, and mirth is good for digestion, I will tell you a merrie iest. There was such a poore man as my selfe, that dwelt (as I do) hard by a Priorie, and he had brought vp in his house a little Lambe, which growing to a sheepe, would wander all abroade, and returne home safe at night without any hurt: at last, this little sheepe, being the poore mans treasure, seeing the Priorie gate open, and the yearde full of grasse, went in and fedde there. The wanton Friers that were idle, would ofte sport with the Lambe, and play withall, and pulled off the woll off the backe, that it had almost left nothing but the bare pelt: which the poore man espying, kept vp his sheep and would not suffer it to goe any more abroade: yet it had gotten such a sweet sauour in the Priorie yard, that assoone as it brake loose, it would thither where the Prior and the Friers spying it againe, consented, and eate it vp all: The good man came to aske for his sheepe, and they laughing at him, gaue him no other amendes but the hornes: so my maisters, if my wife should be your Laundresse, I warrant you if I came to enquire for her, I might haue such fees as the poore man had for his lolle: No no, I am well, I thanke you if my selfe may serue for a Farrier, so it is, but my wife (of all men) shall not haue to deale, either with Prior or Friars. At this they all laught, but the Prior not willing to giue ouer the chase thus, made this answere. Why smith (quoth hee) thou art a foole, thou maiest haue a prouiso for that, for though she wash our clothes, yet shee shall neither fetch them nor bring them home, neither shall there euer a Friar come at thy house, only the Scull of the kitchin, and I hope thou feareſt not him, No quoth the smith, they be these breechlesse yeomen that I stand so much in doubt of: but vpon these conditions aforesaide, that shee shall neither fetch them, nor carry them home, she shall be your Laundresse. Vpon this

they agréed, and the Smith went to his house and tolde his wife all. Shée that was a wily wench thought with her selfe, that whatsoeuer her husband sight for hee would catch a frogge; and that dealt he neuer so wartily, yet she would make him one of the heade men of the Parish, as well as his neighbours. She coniecturing thus with her selfe: the next morning came the Scull early (by that the Smith was vp and at his worke) with soule clothes. God spæd sir quoth hee, I haue brought your wife the Priors linnen; ah welcome good fellow, quoth hee, goe thy waies vp to the chamber to my wife, she is aboue, and I thinke a bed: the Scull trotted vp the staires and saluted the woman: Mistris (quoth he) the Prior hath sent you his clothes and praies you that they may be done on wednesday next: they shall be done, quoth she, with all spæde: and quoth the Scul, his worship wild me in secret to giue you a Ring for a token, and to desire you to thinke that hee loues you as heartily as any woman in the worlde; the poore woman séing a gold Ring, and hauing neuer had any before in her life, held her selfe a proude woman, and bethought her what good giftes she should dayly haue if she had such a Louer as the Prior: wherefore she returned him this answere by the Scull that she had euer thought well of him but her husband was a iealous foole & watcht her narrowly whersoeuer she went, but as farre as shée might, shée was at his commande. Home went the Scull, and the Prior was risen by that hee returned, and askt him what newes: what newes quoth the Scull? mary thus sir, alloone as I came to the doore I found the Smith harde at his worke, and I saluted him by the time of the day, and asked him where his wife was, saying, I had brought the Priors linnen, go vp the staires good fellow (quoth hee) for I thinke my wife is in bed, and sir there indæd I found her, and surely sir, if you will beléeue mee, me thought shée lay too louely in her bed to lie with a Smith; so sir I gaue her your token and told her

what

what you bade me and she made answere that your worship was the man whom she had euer thought well of, but her husbande was a iealous foole, yet as farre as shee could she was at your commande. This satisfied the Priors expectation: and on Wednesday morning when the Scull should goe for his cleane linnen, the Prior compounded with him, and gaue him a brace of angelles to keepe his counsell saying Tom (for so was the Sculles name) thou knowest all flesh is fraile and we are men as well as others, though our profession be more holy, therefore Tom so it is, that I haue loued the Smiths wife a long time, & now may I haue opportunity to fill my desires, I will this morning take thy clothes on and besmeere my face, and with the basket hie for the cleane clothes, only I care for nothing if thou keepe my councell. Feare not that sir, quoth the Scull; but I will be so secret as you can desire; with that the Prior was briefe because hee longed to be there. and on with the Sculles ragges, and taking the basket on his necke, hasted him very orderly to the Smiths house, by that time day did appeare, where he found him hard at worke, Good morrow sir quoth the Prior I am come for the linnen, goe vp the staires fellow quoth the Smith, thou commest very earely my wife is yet in bedde. Vp trudged the Prior, and there he found his paramour in a sweet sleepe, the Prior stept to her and kist her, and with that she awakte and seeing the Scull, why how now sir sawce, quoth she, can you not speake before you come vp, my husband is a wise man to send such companions vp into the chamber where I am in bedde twere no matter and the match were equall to make him weare the horne for it. Oh, be content good Loue, quoth the Prior, for know thou, that I am not Tom Scull; but the Prior himselfe that sent thee the Ring, who for thy sake is come thus disguised, with that he discouered himselfe, and she perceiued it was he, and blusht: hee kist her, and so coniured her, that whiles the

poore Smith was knocking at the Smithie, hee had dubd him knight of the forked order and for feare of suspition, putting his linnen in the basket, away he went, bidding the Smith farewell. Thus the Prior and the Smithes wife contented, and enioying their harts desire, the poore Smith loued her not a whit the worse, neither did he suspect any thing, for the blind eates many a flie, and much water runnes by the mill that the miller wots not on: so played it with this Smith: for twice a weeke came the Prior in his Scalles apparrell to his Lemmon. Thus it continued, till on one morning the Prior was not well, so that he could not goe, but Tom Scull, after his wonted manner, went to carry forth the linnen: and as hee went by the way, he began to thinke with himselfe what a faire woman the Smithes wife was, and how faine he would be partaker with his maister. Hammering this in his heade, on he went to the Smiths house: How Smith quoth hee good morrow, is thy wife vp? no quoth the Smith, but she is awake, go vp and carry your linnen a Gods name: vp came the Scull and rushing in at the chamber doore, threw downe his basket, and seeing the chamber darke that he could not be discouered, slipt to bed, and entred commons with the Prior, and with that gotte him away without saying one worde: The Smithes wife marueled at this, and supposed that hee had hearde some ruffling, and for feare of her husband, had gone away so hastily. Well, within two dayes after came the Prior againe, and after his accustomed maner went vp with his basket, and saluted her after the ould fashion: I pray you tell me maister Prior quoth she, what meant you yesterday morning that you came so quiet, and slipt away with such silence after you got out of bed, by this the Prior perceiued that the scull had cut a shine on his loafe, and so thought to dissemble the matter. Faith sweet heart, quoth he, I heard a noise, and thought it had beene thy husbande that had come vp: so I coniectured, quoth shee

the Smiths wife, and therefore after you were gone, seeing you were frighted with your owne shaddow. I laught hartely: thus as long as they durst they chatted: but at last, the Prior vppe with his basket and away. When he came home, in a great chafe he sent for the Scull, and made inquirie of the matter, the poore fellow affraide of fore threatnings, confessed the matter and craued pardon: but the Prior forgetting his patience, fell vpon poore Tom the Scull, and beate him so sore, that he had almost kild him: afterwardes swearing him on a Booke, if euer after he went with any cloathes, he should go no further then the chamber doore. The Scull agreed to this, and confirmde it with a solemne oath: but the remembrance of his sore blowes, bredde him a mind to reuenge: whereupon resoluing to doe any mischeefe to the Prior that he might, one day he went very orderly to his Smith and carried him to the Ale-house, and there after a longe protestation of silence, reuealed the whole matter vnto him, how the Prior euery day came in his apparrell to his wife, and so made him weare the hornes, while he was busie about his hammers: at this the Smith fetcht a great sigh; alas quoth he, and am I a Cuckold: why not you quoth the scull, as well as your betters: indeed quoth the smith, and that is all the comfort that I haue, that my betters haue had as hard happe for the abbot of Saint Peeters that is an holy man, had but one Lemman, and yet thee was not content with twentie mortells: and I am a poore smith and a lay man, no marualle then if my fortune be as forked as the rest: but by the holy Roode of Rochester quoth hee, I will be so reuenged on the Prior, that after I haue taken him, he shall hate Lechery the worse while hee liues. I but quoth the scull, take heede thou plaguest not mee in steed of the Prior. To auoide therefore all ensuing danger, if I come to morrow, thou shalt know me by this token, I will aske thee whether thou hast drunke this morning or no:

if thou hearest no such watch-word, then know it is the Prior. So be it (quoth the Smith) and vpon this they drunke their drinke and departed. The next morning the Smith was early at his worke, and the Prior that longde to be with his Lemmon was allone awake, and vp hee got, and on with the Sculls apparrell, and to the Smiths house, and after his accustomed maner bade him god morrow, and vp the staires. The Smith perceiuing it was the Prior, because he wanted his watch-word; hied vp presently after him, and tooke the Prior in bed with his wife: why how now Scull quoth hee? will no worse meat go downe with you then my wife? Before you and I part, I will learne you how to make Vulcan of me, without you were more like Mars then you be. Whereupon his man and he (two lustie knaues) stept to him and puld him out of bed, and thrust him in a great lacke, wherein he was wont to put chaffe: when he had done, carried him into the street, and laid him downe before his doore, and then made his wife take a flaile in her hand, and thresh as hard as shoe could: but because hee perceiued her strokes were laid on with fauour, himselfe stod behind her with a great Carters whip, and euery time she fainted in her blowes, hee lent her a lash, that he fetcht the bloud through her petticoate: the people that came by, marualled at this Antike, and askt the Smith what he was a doing: killing of fleas quoth the Smith, that I found this morning in my bed, and because my wife is so idle, and will not strike home, I stand with my whip to whet her on. Neighbours therefore giue good eare and marke the end, and see when my wife hath beaten them enough what foule fleas they be, and by my example learne whensoeuer you take such great fleas in your wiues bed, to put them to the like punishment. The people flocked together to see the sport, and although the Prior was almost bruised to death (though for fauouring of him the Smithes wife

boze many a lash) yet he durst not crie for feare of further discredit, but lay still and suffered all with patience. At last a multitude of people flocking together, it chaunced that vpon serious businesse, the Abbot of Saint Peeters came by, who seeing such a throng, sent one of his men to know what the matter meant. Oh may it please your Lordship quoth the Smith, such a sight as you neuer saw, wherefore for Christs sake, I aske it, that you would take so much paines as to come ouer the way and see: the Abbot stept ouer the channell, and when hee came and saw the Smiths wife with her flaile, and him with his whip, hee wondred, & the Smith told him as the rest, that it was a flea that hee tooke in his wines bed: all this while lay the Prior with a heauy heart, for feare the Smith would shake him out of the sacke: wishing to abide twice so much torment, so hee might escape vnknowne. As the Abbot about this matter stood questioning with the Smith, the Scull that mist the Prior that pull his hower, thought the Smith had plaide some mad prancke with him, went and put on the Priors apparell, and his Coule ouer his head that he might not bee knowne, and went downe to the Smiths house-ward, where seeing a concourse of people, he hasted him thither. At last the Smith spied him and cried, Oh my Lord Abbot yonder comes the Prior of Saint Austins, it was one of his fleas. Well knew the Smith it was Tom Scull; but his wife supposing it to be the Prior, and that he in the sacke was the Scul that had deceiued her, in despight for reuenge laid on such blowes that she needed no whipping to mend her strokes. When the Prior came, & after most humble maner had saluted the Abbot, he desired to know the cause of that strange sight: mary quoth the Smith, Maister Prior I may thanke you for this, for a flea of your Priorie hath leapt from the Monster to my wines bed, and finding it there this morning I put it in a sacke, and caused my wife to thresh it, & for

that both you, & maister Abbot, & all my neighbors shall see what parlous fleas oft happen into womens beds. I will shake him out before you all, and with that vnbound the sacke, and hee threw out the Prior, who being in the Sculls apparrell, was so beimeared and so blondie, that he could not be knowne: Looke here maister Prior quoth the Smith here is the Scull of your Priorie. Oh notable knaue, knaue quoth Tom Scull, to discredit our house. What thinke you of this my Lord Abbot: Is this a sufficient punishment or no, considering by this fault hee shall giue occasion of slander to the whole Priorie. Yee is quoth the Abbot within the iurisdiction of your censure, and therefore deale with him as you list. Mary quoth the Scull then thus: because it is an open fault, it shall haue a more open punishment, for if it be smothered vp thus, they will say that I am a fauourer of sinne: with that he cald to certaine of his conuent, for most of the Monkes of the Priorie were come thither, how say you brethren quoth he, is it not best that he stande all this forenoone on the pillorie, and haue a paper written on his head containing the whole matter of his offence: and the Smithes wife shall stand vnder him with her flaile, and the Smith with his whip: and so quoth the Smith shall all Canterburie laugh at me that come into the market place, to proue my selfe a Cuckold. No goodman Scull quoth he, it shall not be so, and with that he puld of his Cowl and saide, Maisters and neighbors, see here is the Scull of the house, and this beaten in the sacke, is the Prior himselfe, that came to my wife in the Sculls apparrell: at this all the people clapt their hands, laught, & made good game to see how simply the Prior stoode, and in what a maiestie the Scull was in the Priors abiliments. At this sight the Abbot abasht, and the Friers were ashamde: but the scull nothing amazed, beganne afore all the people to say thus. My Maisters quoth he I was once a scholler, though I am now a scull, and then I learned this old saying in La-

tin:

tin, Caute, si non Castè: Liue charily, if not chastely: Be not so forwarde in your follies that you discouer your faultes to the whole world: and especially was this spoken to men of the Church, for in that they know much, and doe dehort others from vice, the people looke their liues and their learning should agree: but when they offend so grosely as Patter Prior, through his ill example, to bring a whole house in slaunder, then are they worthy of double punishment: For we know Friers are men, and I warrant you, there is a great many in England haue done as much to others as he hath done to the Smiths wife & yet haue scapt without discredit: I hope my Lord Abbot, if you enter into your owne conscience, you can verifie as much, and therefore seeing he was so careleſſe of his credit, let him for euer after (to auoid perpetuall infamie of the house) be banisht out of the Priorie. To this they all agreede & the people that heard this collation, said Tom Scull was worthie to be Prior whereupon the Abbot and the Friers consenting, and seeing he had good learning, turned away the old Prior and made Tom Scull Prior in his roome: thus was the Prior punisht for his Lecherie, the Smith reuenged for his Cuckoldry, and the Scull for his blowes, stumbled on a good promotion.

At this merrie tale of the Cobler, all they in the barge laught, and saide the Smith was well reuenged: yea but quoth the Cobler so he was made a Cuckold, and with a heauy heade was the poore Smith faine to go to his hammers, beeing euer after noted for a Cuckold through all Canterburie. There sate a Smith hard by, who grieued at this, that hee should descant so vpon his occupation, and the rather perchaunce hee tooke pepper in the nose, because he was of the same fraternitie, if not with a Prior, yet with some other good fellow, and therefore in a fumo he began thus to reply. Why Cobler quoth hee,

doest thou hold ỹ Smith in such derision because he was a Cuckold: I tell thee Cobler, Kings haue worn hornes: and tis a fault that Fortune exempteth from none: yea, the olde writers haue had it in such questions, that they haue set downe diuerse degrées of Cuckolds: Yea mary quoth the Gentleman, Tarlton in his Purgatory hath deuided them into three sorts. Tush quoth the Smith, Tarlton was a Fole, or he that writ the Booke, for to tell you truth, there be eight degrées, and that I can proue. At this there was a great laughter, & euery man desired him to tell what they were, that I will quoth the Smith they be these.

The eight order of Cuckolds.

Cuckold
1 Machomite.
2 Heretike.
3 Lunaticke.
4 Patient.
5 Incontinent.
6 By consent.
7 By Act of Parliament.
8 Innocent.

And because (quoth the Smith) they may séeme darke and obscure to you, I will briefly make an exposition of them to you, and that is in this manner.

The exposition of the eight degrees of Cuckolds.

1 Cuckold Machomite is an ancient Cuckold, who hath bene married some thirtie or fourtie yeres, and euer since his first marriage hath continued content in that estate being so knowne & notified amongst his Neighbors, therefore being the oldest he is the formost.

2 Cuckold Heretick, is hée that hauing a faire wife and

and honeſt, is ſo blinded with iealouſie and ſuſpition, as he thinks her to be as diſhoneſt as the beſt, but indeed is none, and therefore conſumes himſelfe as an hereſie.

3 Cuckold Lunaticke, is he that being a Cuckold conceiues ſuch inward griefe, that he ſuffers his paſſions to take no reſt, but as a man diſtrackt from his ſenſes, doth all things ſo out of order, as though he were Lunaticke: and therefore hath this title for his humors frenzie.

4 Cuckold Patient, is he that being ſimple of himſelfe, dares not controll the vnbridled affections of his wife, and ſo with patience doth ſuffer himſelfe to be corrnuted: and therefore is called, Cuckold Patient.

5 Cuckold Incontinent, is he that marries himſelfe to a wife of a light diſpoſition, who maketh him a Cuckold the very firſt day of his marriage.

6 Cuckold by conſent, is he that of all other Cuckolds is moſt infamous, who is not only headed as bravely as the reſt, & hath one of light conuerſation but ſoſtereth his wife vp in her follies, & is content to keepe the doore to his wiues laſciuious wantonneſſe, conſenting to more then the ſtrumpet is aſhamde to performe.

7 Cuckold by Act of Parliament, is ſuch a one that when he takes his wife faultie, is not content ſecretly to puniſh the offence, but goes to law with the man for recompence: the Iuell giuing him perhaps for damage ſome i. d. ob. whereby it is regiſtred in the Court by his owne proofe that he is a Cuckold: and therefore is hee called Cuckold by Act of Parliament.

8 Cuckolde Innocent, is when a young man marryeth a Maide or a Wife, whom hee ſuppoſeth

ſo

to be a maid, and yet hath plaid falſe before and perhaps hath had a childe or two; in marying him to ſuch a one, he is called, Cuckold Innocent.

Thus quoth the Smith you haue heard my degrées, and their expoſition: and becauſe I will be quit with the Cobler for the Tale of the Smith, giue me leaue a little and you ſhall heare a merry Jeſt, but becauſe I will let you know what manner of man he was, before his Tale heare his deſcription.

The Deſcription of the Smith.

THis Smith was a quaint fire,
As merrie as bird on brier.
Iocund and gleeſome at euery ſith,
His countenance aye, buxome and blith,
His face full coaly and full black,
Hued like vnto a Colliers ſacke,
Or as if it had beene ſoile in the mier,
Full of wrinkles was his cheekes with the fier
Well he could ſweat and ſwinke
And one that aye loued good drinke,
For hard by his Forge alwaies ſtood,
A ſtond of Ale nappie and good:
Which made the collour of his noſe
Like to the fire when it glowes:
His heade great, his browes broad,
Able to beare a great load,
As no man might hold it ſcorne
On his head to graft a horne.
His coates were fit for the weather,
His pilch made of ſwines leather:
So was his breech, and before

A dustie apron he wore:
Wherein not to faile,
Was many a horseshooe naile,
And for to fit him euery ride,
Hung an hammer by his side.
Thus attired, the Smith gan say,
What befell on a Sommers day.

The Smiths Tale.

Containing a pleasant iest of a iealous Cobler, and how for all his suspition, he was cunningly made Cuckold.

IN Rumney Marsh by the Sea Coast, there dwelled a Cobler, a merrie fellow, and of his middle age: who was wont, on working-daies, to chaunt it out at his worke, and on holydaies to bestirre his stumps in the Church-yeard so merrily after a crowd, that he was welbeloued of all the country wenches, and noted for the flower of good-fellowship throughout all the parish. This Cobler keeping shop for himselfe, had in house with him an old mother of his, who being as it were his seruant, desirous to liue more at ease, wisht him to take a Wife: the Cobler was loth to be perswaded to mariage, and the reason was, for that he feared to be a cuckold: yet at last he cast his eye on a country Lasse, that was a blithe and bonnie wench, and the chiefe of all the Maides of old Rumney: to her was this iolly Cobler a suter, and after a little wooing (as women must be got with praises and promises) the Cobler caught her, and married they must be in all hast: which done, they liued pleasantly together as soles do presently after their wedding; but after the honnie moone was past she like a good huswife fell to her worke, to spin, and carde, and such other deedes of huswifery as belonged to the profite of her house: the Cobler loued her well, and shee wanted

nothing that might satisfie her humour, only shee was charged by her husband, not to goe abroade a gossiping with her neighbours: in so much, that either on working daies or on holy daies, when all the wiues in Rumney went to be merrie, shee was faine (as a poore prisoner) to keepe home: which although she passed ouer with silence and patience, so yet seeing his iealousie was without cause, shee vowed with herselfe if euer a friend & opportunitie serued to her minde, to make him weare the horne an inch longer then all his neighbors: but he kept her short from that, for euery day when shee was at home, she sate by him in the shop where he sung like a Nightingale, hauing his eye neuer off his wiues face; or if she sate within, her mother in law an old iealous woman bore her company; if shee went to fetch water, her mother was at her elbow; whatsoeuer she did, or whither soeuer shee went, to be briefe, her husband, or his mother was at one end, which grieued the yong woman: So suspicious and iealous was the Cobler, that all Rumney talked of his folly: and to vexe him as they passed by, would say to him; Ah neighbour good morrow now that you haue gotten a faire wife, we hope to haue you one of the brotherhode, and that the Cuckow in Aprill may sit and sing in your house, as well as with your poore neighbours. I feare not that quoth the Cobler, let her do her worst, I will giue her leaue, meaning that he kept such narrow watch ouer her, as he could neuer be deceiued, & therefore euery day his wife sitting by him when he was pearking of his shoes, & she at her wheele, then he would chat out this song.

The Coblers song.

WHen as the Nobilitie pull downe their towers,
Their mansion houses and stately bowers:
And with stone and timber make Hospitalls free:
Then the Cobler of Rumney shall a Cuckold bee.

When

When Gentlemen leaue of their peacockly ſutes,
And that all their workes are charities fruites:
Tendring the poore which needie they ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Vſurers run vp and downe with their gold,
And giue it to them from whom it was pould:
And Colliers ſacks ouer great you do ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Weſtminſter Hall is quite without benches,
And Southwarke Bankeſide hath no prettie wenches,
When in Smithfield on Fridayes no iades you can ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Maides hate marriage, and loue to liue chaſte,
Virgins forſooth till foureſcore be paſt:
And loue not that yongmen their beautie ſhould ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When wiues are not wilfull, but needes will obay,
When ſilent and ſpeechleſſe they ſit a whole day:
When Goſſips do meete, and no words will be,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When womens tongues do ceaſe for to wagge,
And ſhoomakers giue not their maiſters the bagge:
When Cuckold and Keepers want hornes for their fee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Tapſters and Ale-wiues from Barwick to Douer,
Fill thirdingdeall pots till the drinke run ouer,
When the quart is ſo full that no froth you can ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Smiths forſweare to drinke of ſtrong ale;

And liue without liquor whiles their nose be pale:
When in Vintners wine no mixture you see,
Then the Cobler,&c.

When Dutch-men hate butter, and the Spaniards pride,
When Cardinals do want a Trull by their side:
When the Pope like Peter humble you see,
Then the Cobler,&c.

Euery day did the Cobler vse to sing this song, and there dwelled next vnto him a Smith that was a tall and a yong lustie fellow, proper of personage, of a comely visage, curteous, gentle, and debonaire, such a one as this Coblers wife could haue wished to her Paramour, if time and opportunitie would haue fauoured her fancie: and the Smith seeing what a smicker woench the Coblers wife was, and what a iealous fool shee had to her husband, sorrowed at the good fortune of the Cobler, that he had so faire a wife, and wished that hee could finde meanes to haue such a one his friend. Vpon this, being next neighbors, and their houses ioyning together, the Smith would oftentimes (when his leysure serued him) come to the Coblers shop and talke with him, where betwæn the Smith and the Coblers wife passed such glances, that he perceiuing there was no want, but place and opportunity to fulfill their desires. One day amongst the rest, Fortune so fauoured this yong couple, that the Cobler went forth to buy leather, and left his mother and his wife in the shop: the old woman not hauing slept the last night, was heauie and fell asleepe, and the yong woman sate singing at her worke. The Smith perceiuing this, laid by his hammers and went to the stall, where he saluted his neighbour, and she returned him the like curtesie.

At last, seeing the old beldame was sure, he began to

reueale

reueale vnto her, how long he had loued her, and how he was sorry that she was combred with such a one, as for his iealousie, aboue all other men deserued to be made a cuckold: sundry speeches past betwéene the Smith and the Coblers wife, till at last shee rose, and gaue him her hand, that shee loued him better than any man in the world, and would (if any occasion would serue) euer striue to content him. Then sweet heart, quoth he, do me but this fauour, faine to morrow some occasion to go to your mothers, and come on the further side of the way fast by such a doore, and then let me alone for opportunitie to satisfie both our desires. To this she agreede, and the Smith went to his shoppe: presently the olde woman awaked, the Cobler came home, and all was well.

At night, when they were in bed, taking him about the necke, she kist him, and told him that certaine of her friends met to morrowe at her mothers, and that shee would faine goe and see them. I pray you good husband, quoth she, let your mother and I go together, I will not part out of her sight, neither will we make any long tarriance: the husband for shame could not deny this request, but granted it: whereupon the next morning she got her vp, and on with her holy day apparell, and made her as fine as fine might bee: The Cobler séing his wife so trickt vp in her cleane linnen, beganne to bee iealous, and called his mother aside, and charged her by that loue she bare him, not to let his wife part out of her companie till she came home againe, which she promised with an oath: so away they went, and the Cobler hee sate him downe and began to sing.

The Smith, that all this day was not idle, had compounded with an olde woman, by whose house she must passe, to fauour them with house-roome, and reuealed vnto her all the matter: whose wife it was, and how he would haue his purpose brought to passe: by my troth

froth sonne quoth she, I haue hard much talke of that iealous cobler, and I would do my endeuour to make the asse weare a horne: vpon this they resolued, and the lik't well of his policie, and saide loue had many shiftes: at last, the Smith spied his mistresse all in her brauerie, comming with her mother in lawe: the old wife was ready, & as she past by the doore, threw a great bowle full of bloudy water, right vpon her head, that all her clothes and cleane linnen was marred, being so berayed that she could go no further. Alas mistresse quoth the old woman, I crye you mercie, what haue I done? full sore it was against my will: but for Gods sake come into the house, and shift you with cleane linnen: if you haue none at home I will lend you of the best that I haue: goe in daughter, quoth her old mother in law it is a chaunce, and against a shrewde turne sometime, no man may be: Ile go home as fast as I can, and go fetch you cleane linnen, the whiles drie you your gowne, and make all things else ready. I pray you do good mother quoth she, and then away goes her mother in law: and as soone as she was out of doores, the old woman led her into an inward parlor where the Smith was: and there these two louers by this policie made the iealous cobler weare the horne.

Whiles thus they were solacing themselues: the old wife she came stumbling home, and for hast had like to breake her necke ouer the threshold, her fall made the cobler start: and when he saw it was his mother, and that he missed his wife, he was halfe mad, asked his mother hastily where she was: the old woman short winded, was almost out of breath, and for a good space sate puffing and blowing to fetch winde; at last shee cryed out: alas deare sonne, such a chaunce as neuer was heard of: as we went through old Rumney, hard by the church, a woman threw out a bowle of bloudy water right vpon your wiues heade, which hath so berayed her linnen and her

her gowne, that she could go no further, and so I as fast as I could came running home for cleane clothes: oh for the passion of God mother quoth he, hie to her chest, and get her cloathes ready, for it may be a fetch to make the poore Cobler a Cuckold; a horne mother is soone grafted: with that the old woman got all in a readinesse, and away ran the Cobler & his mother together. Well the two louers out at a little hole kept good watch and warde, that anone they spied where the Cobler and his mother came trudging: in went his wife, and sate her downe by the fire, where the cobler founde her only sitting with the old woman in her peticoate, drying her gowne, assone as she saw him she wept: and he, although he grieued at the mischance, yet for that he spied her in no company, he was satisfied, and wisht her to be content, & sent for a pot of beere or two to make her drinke: and after he had seene all well, and his wife in her cleane apparrell, setting them a little on the way, home he went againe to his shop, and his wife went to her mothers, where an houre or two she past away the time in chat, and then returned home with her mother in law. Thus the cobler was not suspitious of his wiues beeing abroad, but tooke her misfortune for a chaunce, and the Smith euery day according to his woonted custome, would come and chatte with his neighbour the cobler, and sometimes founde opportunitie to talke with the wife, but neuer out of the shop: on a day the cobler being from home, and the old woman within pacing of her hose, the Smith came to the shop, and finding her alone, began to lay a plot, how to make her husband a cuckold, while he held the doore, shee promist if he would deuise it, she would put it in practise, and so agreed they concluded betweene themselues, and they brought it cunningly to passe thus.

It chaunced within a fortnight after, that as the cobler and his wife lay in bed, shee fell on a great laughter,

her

her husbande demanding the cause, she made him this answer. I will tell you husband a strange thing: so it is, that this other day, when you went to buy leather, my mother and I sate in the shop, and she fel fast aslæp, your neighbour the Smith, he (as his custome is) came to the windowe, and seeing my mother a slæpe began to court me with faire words and large promises, and told mée, that if I would finde the meanes, that when you were out, I would let him lye with me, he would giue me forty shillings. I shakt him off as well as I could, but he would haue no nay at all, but threw foure angels into my lappe, whereupon I tooke the golde, for me thought they were foure faire peeces, and promised him that to morrow you went forth and my mother too, and then he should finde me alone in the chamber. Upon this hee went away, and left me the gold, and therfore if it please you, to morrow I thinke god you should faine your selfe to go abroade and my mother too, and then hide you in a chamber hard by, and as sone as he is come in, you may stand at the doore and heare all our talke: and when you heare mée consent, then breake in, and take the Smith, and swinge him well, and I warrant you husband, there will diuerse commodities rise of it: for not only we shal haue this gold, and get more for amends; but euer after be rid of such a knaue.

This motion pleased the Cobler well, & the rather because the Smith profest to be his great friende, and yet would seeke to do him such disgrace: vpon this conclusion they resolued and so fell a sleep. The next day in the afternone, the Cobler fained himselfe to go out, and his mother with him, and after comming home, at a backe doore went vp into the next chamber & hid themselues. By and by, according to promise came the Smith: and went roundly vppe to the chamber, where he found the Coblers wife: wherefore strait shutting the doore with a boult on the inside, hee fell to set vppe plumes on the

Coblers

Coblers head-peece, the cobler he very easily got to the doore with a great pollax in his hand, and began to listen: with that hee heard the Smith offer faire to his wife: nay (quoth she) I haue kept promise with you, for I onely promised to let you vp into my chamber: tush quoth he, this is but a cauill, and many words past betweene them: the Cobler and his mother standing at the doore, with her nay, and his yea, till the Cobler had a new browe-antler growne out of his old hornes; and then she answered him, seeing nothing would content him, hee should haue his pleasure: with that the Cobler was ready to rush in, but that his mother staid him, and bid him heare further: and doest thou meane good faith, quoth the Smith? yea, wherefore els (quoth the coblers wife) came we into this place: why then (quoth the Smith) heare what I will say to thee: Doest thou thinke, though we be here in secret, that our faits will not be seene openly: that though thy husband knowes not of it, and that it is kept close from the world, that there is not one aboue that sees all, & will reuenge it: yes vilde strumpet as thou art, and for this cause came I to trie thee: thou hast an honest man to thy husband, who loues thee more dearly then himselfe and works hard to suffer thee that thou shalt not want and wilt thou in his ablence wrong him: thinke if euer thou dost it, it will come out, & thou shalt be reuenged with open shame: I am thy husbands dearest friend, with whom I am dayly conuersant, & doest thou think I could find in my hart to offer him such iniury: no: & then art not thou more to blame, that being the wife of his bosome, wilt betray thy husband, who is dearer to thee then all friends: fie vpon thee vild woman, fare thee wel & amend: I will not yet tell thy husband, vnlesse I spie thee prooue light, but I shal neuer thinke well of thee while I liue. & with that he opened ỹ chãber doore, & the cobler chopt in, & taking the smith by ỹ hand, said neighbor I thank you for your good counsell I haue heard all ỹ cõmunicatiõ ỹ past

betwéne you and my wife, and truely: and with that the Cobler wept, I am heartily glad I haue such a trustie friend to whom in my absence at any time, because my mother is an old woman, I may commit the ouersight of my wife: and truely neighbour quoth he, I pray you thinke neuer the worse of her, for she told me the whole matter, & appointed me to stand at the doore, that when you should haue offered her any discurtesie, I might haue rusht in and haue taken you: so that I perceiue you are as honest as she, and shee as honest as you, and that your meanings were both alike. I am glad of that, quoth the Smith, that you haue so vertuous a wife, I hope I haue done the part of a friend, to pleasure my neighbour: you haue done so, quoth the Cobler, and therefore ere we part, weele drinke a quart of wine. So the Cobler bestowed good chéere on the Smith, and euer after accompted him for his friend, and whensoeuer he went out of towne, committed the charge of his wife to the Smith, who at all times had frée egresse and regresse to the Coblers house, without suspition.

This tale of the Smith made all the company to laugh and the cobler he was starke mad for anger, saying: that if it had béene his case, he would haue giuen him wine with a cudgell: tush Cobler, quoth the Smith, neuer thinke but our art can surpasse yours in such wenching matters, and that a Smith can sooner make a Cobler a Cuckold, then a Cobler a Smith: vpon this they fell to iarres, and from words had faine to blowes, if they of the Barge had not parted them: so at last they were quiet: and made friends. And then the Cobler he began to intreate that they would go forward in their merry exercise, whereupon a gentleman sitting by, said, maisters, it is so good to passe away the time, that to continue so honest a sport, I will be next: and thus therefore I will describe him.

The

The deſcription of the Gentleman.

His ſtature was of a middle length,
Well ioynted, of a good ſtrength,
Siken writes report to vs,
Was that Troian Troilus:
For he was of a comely viſage,
And his manners of a curteous vſage.
His haire in curled lockes hung downe,
And well I wot the cullour was nut browne:
And yet it was full bright and ſheene,
Such wore Paris I weene,
When he ſailed to Græcia,
To fetch the faire Helena,
His front was of a ſiluer hue,
Powdred thicke with veines blue,
His eyes were luminous,
Chriſtalyne and beauteous:
Gray and ſparkling like the ſtarres,
When the day her light vp ſparres.
His cheekes like the Lillies white,
Or as Luna being bright:
And yet comely therevpon
Was ſhaddowed cullour Vermilion:
That gazers all woulden ſuppoſe,
How the Lillie and the Roſe,
Did maken warre each with other,
His ſuercoate was of Satten blew,
Like vnto a louer true:
His hoſe were garded along,
With many a broad and veluet thong.
His cloake grew large and fid,
And a faire whinniard by his ſide.

The pummell guilt, and on his head
He had a bonnet cullord red:
An alder leefer ſwaine I weene,
In the Barge there was not ſeene:
And then thus he gan to tell,
What in Cambridge a ſcholler befell.

The Gentlemans tale.

Containing the contrary fortunes that a ſcholler of Cambridge had in his loues.

IN the Vniuerſitie of Cambridge, in Peters Hoſtell there liued a Scholler famous for his learning, called Rowland, who being placed there by his friends, ſo profited, that he grew to be one of the fellows of the houſe, being in great eſtimation for the honeſtie of his life, and the excellencie of his learning: hee was a man as well proportioned as hee was qualified: and had as well *bona corporis*, as hee had *bona animi*, and could as well play the wagge and the wanton abroad, as he could apply his Bookes and ſtudy at home: amorous hée was, & one that delighted to féede his eye with euery faire face, which after returned to his great preiudice thus It fortuned on a day in the ſummer ſeaſon, that for recreation he walked as far as Cherrihinton, to eate a meſſe of Creame, where being very pleaſant, as he ſate ieaſting with his Hoſteſſe; there came in a Gentlemans daughter in the towne, a maide of exceeding beautie, ſo well proportioned in the lineaments of her face, that Nature ſeemed to trie in her an experiment of her cunning. This girle, as wiſe as thee was faire, and as wanton as thee was wittie, came in and queſtioned with the Hoſteſſe about ſome buſineſſe: Rowland ſeeing ſuch a Nimph come ſweeping in, thought eyther Venus or Diana had

come

come in their country weedes to bewitch mens fancies: he cast his eye vpon the excellencie of her phisiognomy with such a piercing looke, that Loue entring by the eye, so wrong him at the heart, that forsoth fancie her of force he must.

Nowe my young Scholler could doe nothing but gaze vpon her, for Court her he could not vnlesse hee should haue begun to woe her with some words of Art, or some Axiomes of Philosophie. The young Gentlewoman seing the Scholler looke so earnestly vpon her, beganne to blush, and so taking her leaue of the Hostesse went her way. The Scholler seeing her gone out of doores, thought of the old prouerbe: Faint heart neuer wonne faire Lady: and therefore called to her thus: faire Gentlewoman quoth he, you may see we Schollers haue little maners, that holding the pot in our hands, will not make such a sweete saint as you drinke: how say you Gentlewoman, will it please you to pledge me? The wily wench hearing such a Schollerlike gratulation, seeing by this salute, that Schollers had read of Loue, more then they could say of Loue: and though they could tell what was Latine for a faire woman, yet could neither woe her, nor winne her, turned backe againe, and with a lowe curtesie thanked him. Yee off with his corner Cappe, (for he was a Batcheler in Artes) and with a glancing looke drunke to her: She like a wanton pledged him with a smile. Rowland at this taking heart at grasse, stept to her, and tooke her by the hand: beginning thus to holde her in chat.

Your Towne here (forsooth) of Cherryhinton, hath made me oft play the truant to come hither for cheries: and as mine Hostes can tell, full many a messe of creame haue I eaten in her house: for we scholliers are good cõpanions, & loue to be pleasant: especially if we might haue the company of such a faire Gentlewoman as your selfe.

Therefore Mistris, if I chaunce to come to towne to eate a pound of cherries (if I may be so bold) I wold trouble you to take part with me; and if I meete you at Cambridge, the best wine in the Towne shall be your welcome: the wench (that had much adoe to keepe her countenance) thought to feede him with her faire speeches, till shee made him as fat as a fole, and therefore made him this replie. Truely sir, indeede many Schollers come to Cherryhinton to eate cherries: but sir, you are the first man that euer I dranke withall: for Schollers be so full of their learning, and fine tearmes, that country wenches cannot vnderstand them, but I for my part at the first sight like of you so well, that if my leasure serue, whensoeuer you come and please to send for me, I will as long as I dare beare you company, but now for soth time cals me away, and I must be gone. With all my heart quoth Rowland, but truely we must not part without a kisse which she willingly tooke at his hands, and went home: where assone as she came, she reuealed all to a young Gentleman that lay in her fathers house, who was sure to her: they laughing heartily at the schollers Courting, and resoluing to make good sport with him ere they had done. But Rowland he that thought euery smile was a fancie, and euery maide that laught on him, loued him, coniectured assuredly by the familiar curtesie of the gentlewoman, that she was greatly affectionate towards him: whereupon he began to enquire of his hostesse whose daughter she was, of what wealth her father was, what children he had, and what Dowrie the maide was like to haue to her portion, as a man resolued the woman was already wonne, because she had giuen him such gratious fauours. The Hostesse as well as she could, told him all: which done he payed his shot, and went to Cambridge, where he began altogether to muse on the beautie of his mistris, and to lay an hundred plots in his heade what were best to be done: at last

he

he resolued to send a letter to her, to signifie his loue: or else to go himselfe, & to carry two or three of his fellowes with him, and so to discourse vnto her how he loued her; but at the last he fully determined with himselfe to write vnto her: wherefore taking pen and inke in his hande, wrote a letter to her to this effect.

Rowlands Letter to the faire Maide of Cherryhinton.

MIstris Marian, Aristotle the great Philosopher; for all his wit was in loue with Hermia: and Socrates the sage, could not so farre subdue his passions, but that he fell in feakes with Zantippa: Schollers as they read much of loue, so when they once fall in loue there is no ho with them till they haue their loue. The finest glasse is most brittle, and the best Schollers soonest ouergone with fancie. For an instance, was not Ouid as deepe in loue, as he was excellent in learning: I bring in these comparisons, Mistris Marian, because the other Sunday being at Cherryhinton, and seeing your sweet selfe, I was so ouertaken with your beautie, and good behauiour, that euer since the remembrance of your face could neuer out of my fancie: nor, I thinke neuer shall, although I should be drencht in forgetfull flouds of Lethe. Seeing then my affection is so great, I pray you consider of me, and be not so vnkinde, but let me haue loue for loue: and though here in the Vniuersitie you see me simple, yet my parents at home are men of good parentage, & what I want in wealth, I shall supplie in learning: ponder with your selfe, and read but the lines and answeres of the Philosophers, and see how they vsed their wiues, with what curtesie, how euer the women were the most Waiters, and had the Soueraintie, which they desire. Thus hoping you will consider of my loue, desiring you to send me an answere, I bid you farewell.

Yours in dust and ashes, Rowland.

When he had thus finished this letter, he thought to shew himselfe somewhat poeticall, and thought a letter was not worth a rush vnlesse there were some verses at the latter end, and there he affixed as a postscript this amorous ditty.

Rowlands song to his Mistris.

APproch in place Pierides,
My vaine in verses to bend:
Dam: Chryseis which gau'st Homer sucke,
Thy tender teats me lend.

Alcmena thou which Ioue didst rocke,
In cradle full of ioy:
Eke swathe me in those swadling clowts,
Account me for thy boy.

Yea Naiades and pretty Nimphs,
That on Parnassus dwell:
Lend me your Muse that I may now,
My mistris beauty tell.

How that in beauty she doth passe,
Venus the Queene of Loue:
To whom, if I do gaine her grace,
I will be Turtle Doue.

Therefore my deere conceiue my griefe,
And thinke how I do loue thee:
And in some lines send me releefe
For time and truth shall prooue mee.

Thus hoping pen and paper shall
Thy mind to me short tell:
But loue me as I do loue thee
And so my deere farewell.

Thus

THus hauing both finished his letter and his verse, he sent them by a conuenient messenger the next saterday to Chery-hinton, and that forsoth was his Hostesse: who very orderly sent for the Gentlewoman to her house, & deliuered the letters to her, with earnest commendations from sir Rowland. The Gentlewoman in outward shew seemed to accept them as gratefully, as he sent them louingly, and so hied her home: where presently she called for her new betrothed husbande, and other gentlemen her friends, and reuealed vnto them how she had receiued letters from her new Louer the Scholler. All they flocked about her, to heare what excellent stuffe was contained in so learned a mans letter: but when they heard how like a Philosophicall sole he writ, they all in a Synode peremptorily concluded, that the greatest Clarkes were not the wisest men: and I marualle of that, quoth one of the company: for two reasons: for the one, I haue heard this old said saw, that loue makes men Orators, and affection whetteth on eloquence: secondly, there was none more amorous then Ouid (yet a profound scholler) insomuch that he writ three bookes *de arte amandi*, and so did Anacreon, Tibullus, and Propertius. Yea but, quoth another, as they were schollers so were they well brought vp in the Court, and knew as many externall matters, as they did inwarde Principles: but beware my maisters, when a scholler is once brought vp in the Vniuersities, and hath no other bringing vp but plaine *ergo* to plod in, nor conuerseth with none but his bookes, and then hap to fall in loue, trust me he will be as ignorant to woe as the Ploughman to dispute, thinking that womans fancies are won with figures, and their thoughts ouer-reacht with the quiddities of Art: but of all that euer I heard writ, this setteth downe his minde the most simply: and therefore quoth Marian shall he be answered as solishly, for I my selfe will be Secretary. Nay quoth diuerse of the gentle-

men, wee will put in our verdict with you: No quoth shee trye but a womans witte: thats knauish enough quoth one of them: and stepping to her standish shee wrote thus.

Marian of Cherryhinton to Sir Rowland of Cambridge, health.

Sweet sir Rowland, I receiued your letters, wherein I perceiue that Schollers in loue are like to a Sow in pig vnder an Apple-tree, which either hastily must haue a grab, or else loose their litter. If I bring in a country comparison blame me not, in that I am a Country wench, and haue none but plaine country Logicke, but whatsoeuer I write, I meane well. Indeede rightly you say, that the finest glasse is most brittle, and the best Schollers soonest pinched with Loue, which I thinke to be true: for assoone as euer I saw you, how your eyes waited vpon my face, as an obiect of your delight, I take you to be too wise, kind, and amorous: and therefore seeing euer since you haue beene passionate, it were great pittie that you should not haue for your paines (euen as wee vse in a homely prouerbe) a country sacke full of loue: and the rather you induce mee to thinke well of you, that you bring in the examples of Aristotle and Hermia, and of Socrates and Zantippa: whereby you seeme to promise, that I shall as they had, enioy the soueraintie; and that if I be like them in conditions, you will be as suffering as they in patience: yet will I neither be so proud towards you as Hermia, for she ridde Aristole with a snaffle like a horse: nor so waspish as Zantippa, for she crowned Socrates with a Chamberpot, but betweene both: and so wishing you hope the best I bid you farewell.

Yours neuer, if not euer, Marian of Cherryhinton.

After

After she had done her letter, that she might seeme to be no whit behinde him in any good will: she leaned her head on her hand, and in a Poeticall furie writ her louer these verses.

Mariana verses to Sir Rowland.

FEare not my deare the stormes of loue,
For they are passing sower:
And sometimes sweet as hony comb,
And all within an hower.

Like to a Sunshine Summers day,
When Phœbus shewes amaine:
And yet ere night from tawnie cloudes,
Doth fall a showre of raine.

So whatsoeuer chaunce betide,
Or whatsoeuer fall:
If father frowne, or mother chide,
Yet you must beare withall.

For why? the Cuckow doth not come,
In Aprill more sure:
Then I will fixe my loue on thee,
For euer to endure.

Thus wishing thee to thinke on me,
In study or in streete:
I bid you heartily farewell
Till wee in Cambridge meete.

HAuing thus ended her song and the letter, shee calde the conuocation of the merry gentlemen, and shewed them her humour in prose, and her vaine in verse: asking if shee had done it knauishly inough: yea quoth her betrothed husband, and so exceeding well, that you shall stand for foure and twentie knaues till Christmas nert. Tush quoth another, womens wittes are like Sheffield knues, for they are sometimes so keens as they will cutte a haire, and sometimes so blunt that they must goe to the grindstone. That is (quoth the second) when you perswade them to silence or obedience, talke with them but in that doctrine, and they are meere dunces.

Thus they began to descant of womens wit: but the gentlewoman wily enough left them all, & went & laid vp her letters till Saturday market: then shee went to his hostes, & deliuered them to her, earnestly intreating her, if shee saw her Rowland, to conuey that packet to him. The Hostesse promised her to do it faithfully, and effectually: and away to Cambridge shee went, where scarce she was set with her butter and her milke, but shee spied sir Rowland come singing downe the market hill, in his wide sleeude Gowne, and his corner cappe, she neede not to call him, for he straight founde her out, and shee as sone deliuered him the packet: sir Rowland thankt her: and away he went to his studie to reade the contents: but it was too farre to Peters Hostell, and therefore hee cald in at a Tauerne by the way for a pinte of wine, and there he opened the letter, which when he had read, hee perceiued by the contents shee loued him: for shee being simple, perceiued not how shee bobde toole with him: but taking euery iest for a sentence, hee thought himselfe the Maister of all worldly content, and that Fortune coulde not aduance him higher on her wheele, then to haue so faire a maide to his Paramour. Then hee viewed ouer her verses, and in a great passi-

on

on praised her Poetry, commended her wit, saying: for Nature she was Iuno, for beautie Venus, for learning and qualities Pallas: thus in meditation of his letter, and his Loue, sate poore sir Rowland from eight a clocke, till eleuen and then hearing the Hostell Bell ringe to dinner, for feare hee should loose his halfe-penny chops, hee put vp his letter into his pocket, and went his way. After dinner he fell to his old vaine: got alone to be solitarie, & then sate ruminating on the good successe of his loues accompting it rather to his profession then his fortune, for he thought none so faire, chast, nor rich, but a Scholler, might win with his Logicke. thus he passed ouer, day by day, in sending of letters to his loue, and diuers times resorting thither, but seldome could he speake with her, for that shee fained some excuse; only when shee ment to laugh, then she was for his company. But it fell out, that one Saturday aboue the rest, sir Rowland mette her in Cambridge, and finding her with other of his neighbours saluted her and would nædes welcome her to the towne with a pint of Wine, which shee tooke very kindly, that she might sooth him vp still in his vaine hope, and forsooth to the Tauerne she and her companions went with him where they had good game at our Cambridge wooer: but Marian taking him aside, told him that her father and her mother had intelligence of their loues, and as farre as shee could conjecture, it was by his hostesse: therefore shee wild him not to make her priuie to his secrets any more, nor to come to Cherryhinton but when she sent for him, which shold be as often as opportunitie would serue, hoping, though her father now were not forward yet in time he would consent, & especially, if he saw him Maister of Artes: with this the scholler rested satisfied, and they dranke their wine and departed. Thus betweene them passed on all the summer, till the deepe of winter, about Christmas, when she on a time & the rest of the Gentlemen, desirous to be pleasant, determined to

haue some sport with the Scholler, and so caused Marian to send a letter for him, that he should come that night and speake with her: which she did; and he (poore soule) no sooner receiued it, but in all haste hied him in the frostie euening to Cherryhinton: where when hee came, hee straight spake with Marian, and she wisht him to stay in an old barne, while her father was at supper, and then she would conuey him into a back court, where he should walke hard vnder her chamber doore, and then when her father were in bed, she would let him in. The Scholler stoode there a while, and Marian came straite and conducted him into a square court, where Rowland rested him till her father should goe to bed. The night grew darke, and with that passing cold, so that Rowland waxed weary of his standing, and wisht that her father were in bed: there stood the poore Scholler shaking and trembling in his ioints, till it was eleuen of the clocke: then saw hée a light at the doore, and he heard Marian call him: oh blessed houre thought he, that now I shall go both to a good fire and to my louer. Sir Rowland (quoth she) be still a while, my father & my mother is gone to bed, but my brother and two gentlemen more are vp at cardes, and they haue but a set to play, and then they will to their rest: alas swéet heart (quoth he I am almost starued for cold, yet the hope that I haue to enioy thy presence, doth comfort me, that I take all things with patience. The Gentlemen that stood hard by and heard al this, laught at the scholler, and vp they went againe to their chamber to be merry, but still walkt poore Rowland, beating his hands about him for cold, and expecting still when his Louer should call him: well, there he trauest his ground still like a pery-patetian, and only had the sight of the heauens to contemplate, till it was about one of the clocke, and then came they all downe againe to laugh & assoone as he saw the candle at the chinke of the doore, he began to be comforted, and came thither, shaking & beating of his téeth so

sore,

sore that he could not speake. Where are you sweet heart (quoth she) alas how sory am I for thy distresse, thinke that the heart in my belly is as colde for griefe as thy ioynts are with the frost, faine would I haue thee come in, but the loosers will not part play, and so they sitte still therefore I hope thou wilt weigh my credit. Oh Marian, (quoth he) and his teeth iarred one against another, that they could scarce vnderstande him, I am like to perish with cold, yet were it twice as frosty and the night thrise as long, I would walke here rather than procure thy disparagment: gramercie sweet loue (quoth she) & with that she bid him be still a while, and the gentlemen all fel a laughing to heare how kinde a sole the scholler was, and with what patience he bid pennance: oh, quoth the one of them, that is but an experiment of his Philosophicall principles, for he reades in Tully

Non oportet sapientem in aduersis dolore concidere.

I (quoth the second) and Mimus Publius gines him this councell.

Aduersis proba, vt fortunam, cum necesse fuerit,
Patienter insultantem feras.

You say well (quoth the third) but let him for mee make instance of himselfe for such axiomes, I will rather be a warme sole, than so cold a Philosopher. Thus they ran descant vpon the poore Schollers miserie, till the clock stroke three, and then as they were comming downe, they heard a noise at the doore, which was this poore Rowland creeping vnder the shade for warmth, his teeth beating so lowde, that they might heare them easily vpp the staires, all this moued not my young Mistresse to pittie, but encreased their laughter. Alwne as hee heard them come downe the staires, almost dead

he

he called out, who is there? oh sweet heart it is thy Marian, quoth shee. Then for Gods sake, quoth Rowland take pitie of my life, for I am almost dead, doe but open the doore, and let me sit heere vpon the staires, that I may haue some shelter from the colde. Alas, quoth she, sweet loue, thou shalt and thou wilt, but when the doore is opened, it makes such a noise, that it wakens the whole house. Rather quoth he, let me suffer death, then you be discredited, for if I were to abide the stone of Sisiphus, the wheele of Ixion, the gripe of Prometheus, & the hunger of Tantalus, yet had I rather pocket vp all these tortures with patience, than bring thy credit within the compasse of the least preiudice: at this periode she left him and vp they went, smiling at the constancie of Rowland. The Gentlemen they were sleepie, and went to bed, and Marian (as far as I can coniecture) though it were somewhat before the marriage, that night made tryall of her new betrothed husband, where from thee, she lay with him till fir, and then it wared day light, and she rose: and remembring her louer went downe, opened the doore, and found him almost senselesse: there wiping her eyes, as though shee had wept, shee perswaded him that shee was the most sorrowfull woman in the world for his sharpe frostie night he had suffered, protesting she was falne into an ague, for very feare and greefe she had taken to see him in such distresse, & could by no meanes redresse it: but good Rowland (quoth shee) be content, hie thee to Cambridge, and take some hote brothes, lest by this meanes thou fall into a sicknes, and then for very sorrow I die: no quoth Rowland, & he could scarce speake or goe, feare not me, for the hope of thy after fauours, will be a sufficient comfort for me: and with that taking his leaue for his cold nights worke he had a kisse, and so departed. Well, as weake as he was home he scambled, & got to his chamber, & discouered to a friend of his, how he was like to perish of an extreame cold he had taken, if he did not so

much for him as to get him a phisitiõ, who straight went and brought him a Doctor, that with inward potions, and outward oyles and vnguents so wrought him, that hee recouered him to his former health, although very hardly: for he was so frozen in his loynes, and so nipped in the mulkells and sinewes, that if his Phisition had not beene good, he had perished. It was almost a quarter of a yeare before Rowland was frolicke againe: in which time Marian thinking she had lost her louer with a nutte, sent him a present of apples to winne him againe, which hee receiued so gratefully, that he valewed the worst of them worth a felowship, eating them with such an extraordinarie taste, that hee imagined them as sweet as Ambrosia, and all, for that they came from his Marian. Thus continued Rowland in his amorous humour, vntill such times as Marian forsoth must be maried, and for that it was Aduent, there was no asking in the Church, but they procured a licence the day before. As shee and the rest of her friends which were inuited to the nuptials, were merrily iesting, oh Lord (quoth shee) I had almost forgot my selfe, to morrow must be the wedding, and the bride is at Cambridge: why gentlemen, it were no bargaine if Rowland were not here, therefore quoth shee, I will send for him, and lay such a plotte that hee shall be with vs all dinner, & yet tast none of our meate. I pray you quoth her husband, let vs see your cunning in that? Alas quoth one of the Gentlemen, poore Rowland is credulous, and whatsoeuer mistris Marian saith, hee thinks it is Gospel, but if he will be so simple as to thinke that his last nights worke is not a sufficient warning, he is worthie of whatsoeuer befalles. Well, vpon this Marian sent for him, and come hee did in the euening, where, to make my tale short, she made him walke in his wonted state till one of the clocke, then she let him in to a good fire, where he well warmed himselfe, and shee louingly sate by him, discoursing of the last nights worke

that hée abode so patiently: at last shée commanded the mayde to lay the cloath, that they might haue some quelque chose for a reare supper, which they went busily about: for Rowland said, hée was very hungry. As the cloth was laide, and they ready to sit downe, the wench came running in, and said that her maister was rising, & seeing the light of the fire, was comming into the parlor. Alas, what shall I do quoth Marian? hide me some where quoth Rowland, whiles he be gone to bed. Come quoth she, here stands a new truncke and a large, come skippe into it, and I will for a while rake vp the fire, and goe to bed while the old man be faine a slépe: with that Rowland whipt into the truncke, and she lockt him in, & straight in a pleasant humor went to her new husband, where she lay all night, and left Rowland safe shutte vp for starting. Still lay he expecting when she shold come: but hearing nothing, extremely weary for very griefe, he fell a slép till the next morning.

When the poore scholler awakt, and entred into consideration where he was, he began to be halfe in suspition that he was mockt & abused, still he lay patiently till he heard them of the house say: God morrow Mistresse Marian, God send you a good day: to day the sunne shines faire, you shall haue a clére day to your wedding. This word went as cold to his heart as a knife, that Marian should be married & he made a sole to suffer such disparagement of his credit: yet (as before) he was patient in extreames, and so resolued with content to sée the successe of his abuse. Well, to Church goe the Bridegrome and the Bride, with all their friends attendants, and maried they were with great solemnitie: this done, home they come to dinner, and after they were sette and placed in the Parlour where this Trunke stode, they fell to their viands, which were very sumptuous. The Gentlemen bidding reach downe the Pig, the Capon, Goose, Swan, Turkey, Phesant, Bitour, Venison, & such daintie cates:

all

all this heard Rowland, and being passing hungry, wished he had a legge of the worst of them in his hand: still he stode almost famished and smothered, till the tables were taken vp, and bordes shifted, and they fell to dauncing. All this heard Rowland, and hearing the musicke, fell a sleepe vntill supper time, and then he awakt, and heard how they laide the tables and went to supper where they were passing pleasant, and the more, for that they ment to make sport with Rowland after supper was done, which continued so long, for they made the more haste for that they meant to be merry. When the cloth was taken vp the Bride fetcht a great sigh: what wife quoth the Bridegrome, why sigh you? in a dumpe: repent you of the match: no quoth she but I haue a blot in my conscience, & now before you all I meane to reueale it. I was once beloued of a Cambridge Scholler, who loued me entirely & suffered much for my sake: then from poynt to poynt shee recompted vnto them the whole discourse of the loues and fortunes passed betweene Rowland and her, whereat the company had good sport.

A man he was quoth shee, wise, proper and well proportioned: and for proofe, hould the key, open the truncke quoth she, and I will shew you his picture.

Rowland hearing this armd himselfe to suffer all, & so the trunck was opened and he rose out like Lazarus from his graue Good Lord quoth the companie, what is this a spirit? *In nomine Iesus vnde venis? E purgatorio* quoth Rowland. And with that all the company laught while they could sitte: At last when they were weary with laughing Rowland had silence, hee boldly said: thus I am glad Gentlemen that my mishap hath made you so merrie, and that mistris Bride hath so large a plaine song to runne descant on *Caueat Emptor*: this is but a Comedie, but looke for a Tragedie whensoeuer it falles. And so he went out of the doore sore ashamed that hee

had such a kindly scoffe. The company laught well, and hee patiently went home, thinking how fortunate a man he should be, if he might liue to reuenge. Rowland at this misfortune had an insight into the worlde, and began to ware wiser, that in short time hee became to haue as much knowledge in worldly affayres as in his booke, and was (for his good behauiour and pleasant witte) highly had in estimation, not onely amongest Scholliers, but amongst Townesmen, that in all the Vniuersitie he was called the Gentlemanlike Scholler. Liuing thus in good credite, and yet discontented, because Fortune fauoured him with no opportunitie to reuenge: it so fell out at length, that Marian comming euerie weeke to Cambridge, espyed among the Scholliers one whom she cast her eye on, and thought him the properest man in the whole Vniuersitie: Well, shee counted it but a glaunce, and thought as lightly to passe it ouer as it sleightly entred: for she found loue, that though he entred in by graunt of curtesie, yet hee woulde not bee thrust out by force of extremitie: insomuch that shee could not content herselfe without, but with the sight of her new friende, which was done so manifestly that the Scholler perceiued it, and eyming at the fairest, on Saturday seeing her in the market, offered her a quart of wine, which she tooke very gratefully, and began to bee very familiar with him, insomuch that before they past, force of loue made her so shamelesse that she was content to yeeld to his request, so that time and place would serue without the disparagement of her credit.

Vpon this they concluded, that maister Awdrey (for so we will call him) should growe familiar with her husband, and by that meanes shoulde hee haue a better meanes to the quieting of his minde. Vpon this determination they departed, and hee so brought it to passe, that not onely he was acquainted with her husband, but very familiar, that hee would carry maister Awdrey

often

often from Cambridge with him to Cherryhinton, and I hope you do imagine hée was no little welcome Guest to his wife. Being thus fitted in their passions onely watching for place, lingring of the time, at last it was concluded, that she should come on a Saturday to Cambridge, and faine to stay with a kinswoman of hers that dwelt in the Towne, and so lye with her all night: this stood for a sentence, and so the next weeke was decréed. In the meane time it so fell out, that maister Audrey and sir Rowland being of great acquaintance, and such priuate familiars, that nothing was holden too secret betwéene them. Maister Awdrey smothering this ioy in himselfe, thought to partake it with his friend: and so as he and sir Rowland were walking, he reuealed vnto him the loue that had past betwéene him and Marian, and on Saturday was the night when his *posse* should come into *esse*, desiring him to tell him where he might haue house fit for such a purpose. Sir Rowland hearing this, smilde, which made M. Awdrey to enquire the cause of his laughter: wherupon sitting downe vpon the grasse he began to recount vnto him the whole discourse of his loues with Marian, & what sundry abuses he suffered at her hand, to the great & vtter infamy of schollers. M. Awdrey hearing this, sate a great while in a muse, at last he said, and will women be Crocodiles, to wap rose-water & vinegar at one time, still to daly in extremes, to loue without reason, and hate without cause: oh the folly of men to be such, to such painted sepulchres, whose painted sheaths hold leaden blades, whose skinns are glorious like panthers, but haue deuouring panches. By that God that drew ỹ infortunate female from that fortunate Adam, I hate her as extremely as I loued her earnestly: & I will not only yéeld thée opportunity to reuenge, but Ile ioyne issue with thée to perform it to the vttermost. At this Rowland was tickled with inward ioy, & taking Awdrey in his armes, protested such humble seruice for that friendly promise,

as euer should lie in his abilitie to execute. Thus in this determination of reuenge they crost the fieldes to Trumpinton: and there they eate a messe of Creame, whither by chaunce came one of the Proctors, with whom both Rowland and Awdrey were very familiar: him they had in and made him as good there as such a simple Ale house could afford, and there in priuate reuealed to him all their practise, desireing his furtherance in the matter. The Proctor promised to do what in him lay for the execution of this merry action, and there amongst them they laying and confirming the plot, they went altogether home to Cambridge, where they past away the time pleasantly till Saturday came: and then according to promise was Marian there, and mette with Awdrey, who entertained her with all the curtesie that hee could, spending the day at the Tauerne whiles night came, and then hee carried her to the house appointed, such a *Subaudi domus* as was fitte for such a purpose: and there they supt. In the meane time Rowland had sent a letter to her husband in Awdreys name, that his wife being not well was faine to stay at her kinswoman all night, and desired him to come to her the next morning, and that her father and the rest of the gentlemen would come with him, for that they should see Rowland taken in bed with a prettie wench. This letter in all haste was conueied to Cherryhinton to her husband, who reading the contents waxed somewhat tealous, because hee had seene very familiar curtesie betweene Awdrey and his wife, thought Scholliers were slie fellowes, and could deuise many such Sophistications to make a man a Cuckold, but he concealed his suspition to himselfe, and shewed the letter to his father in law and the rest of the Gentlemen, who as they sorrowed his wife was not well, so they were all glad to see such a comicall fortune of Rowland, her husband taking euery word for his aduantage, sayd he would be there by

four

foure of the clocke to ſe Rowland taken vp. Thus they all agreede, and were gone by two of the clocke, where we leaue them comming to Cambridge: and againe to Marian who after ſupper ſate vp late, but Awdrey fild her full of Wine till ſhe was almoſt drunke, that ſhee was very heauy, and deſired to goe to bed, which ſhee did, and was no ſoner laide but ſhe fell a ſleep, and Awdrey ſlipping out, put out the candle and ſent in Rowland, and bade him now goe to his miſtris: hee went into the chamber and lockt the doore: and maiſter Awdrey ſtole out of the houſe and went to his chamber, leaving Rowland with his paramour. where I thinke more for enuy of the man, then for loue of the woman, perhaps hee dubbe him one of Paris Prieſthood, howſoeuer it was ſhe deſcried not how it was, but both fell a ſleep: on the morrow by foure of the clocke was Marians husband, her father and the reſt of the Gentlemen at Peters Hoſtell, where finding the gate open, they went to maiſter Awdreyes chamber and raiſed him vp, who quickly ſlipping on his clothes, welcomed them, and went with them to finde out the Proctor, who watching for their comming already, was with a dozen maiſters of Art well appointed walking in the court yeard, & preſently went his way with them, & came to the houſe where Rowland lay: the Proctor knockt, and bade open the doore: who is that quoth the good wife? the Proctor quoth he: open the doore & that quickly or I will beat it downe: the good man came ſtumbling downe in his ſhirt, and the good wife was ſo amazed that ſhe could not remember to tell her gueſtes. The Proctor came in, and by the direction of Awdrey went ſtraite vp to the chamber, who be here quoth the Proctor? none ſir quoth he, but a ſtranger and his wife: beate it open with a holbert quoth the Proctor: and with that for haſte Marians husband ran againſt it, & the doore fell downe and he into the chamber: with that Rowland couered her cloſe, and ſtepping out of the bed in his ſhirt,

aſked

asked what they meant. Ah sir Rowland quoth the Proctor, I am sorry I haue diseased you this morne, I thought full little to haue found you here, what is the cause you lie out of the Hostel to night: truly sir quoth he, I was late abroad this night making merry with my friends, and so I was faine to take vp my lodging here. How do you sir Rowland quoth Marians husband & her father, I marueil we see you not at Cherryhinton. Oh maisters quoth hee, when there is another Comedy to play, looke for me, but if you remember, I promist you a tragedy first, whē that is studied, I warrant I will visit you, poore Marian lying in bed, & hearing all this how she was betraied, and had laid with Rowland all night, & how her father & her husband were there present, thought surely now Rowland to the vttermost wold be reuenged vpon her, so that she fel into a great sweat for feare. The Proctor that had his lesson taught him, said, well sir Rowland, had it bene any other but you that had bin taken abroad, and in such a suspected house he should haue gone to the Towle-booth: but since you haue no other company, farewel. Awdrey iogd vpon Marians husband, & as they were ready to go out of doore, tush M. Proctor quoth he, but I maruel you examine not who it is that lies with him, it may be a prettie wench. What? is there one lies with him? yea mary is there sir quoth he, and with that stepping to the bed, threw off all the cloathes, and there lay his wife in her smocke.

Sante amen, quoth Rowland who is heere?
Haue you seene such a chaunce this yeere?
What a woodcocke to come so soone,
From Cherryhinton to Cambridge before
And found a Cuckowes nest (noone,
Is this, maisters (in earnest or in iest?)
That Rowland so early in a morne,
Should make a knaue weare a horne:
What man! be not agast?
For you cannot call backe that is past.

At

At this all the Schollers fell a laughing, and sir Rowland sate him downe in his shirt, and (to make the matter vp, that it might be a right blacke Santus) while they laught cryed Cuckow. The Gentleman seeing his wife, and the father his daughter, they were in such a maze, that they stoode as men senselesse: they fell out a weeping, the Scholler a laughing, the Gentlemen a sighing, and still Rowland kept his wench, and cryed Cuckow: at last Rowland began thus. Why you my maisters and friends of Cherryhinton, did I not promise you a Tragedie, and haue I not now brought it to passe: I hope this Dame, and you all remember my frostie night, and how I was brought out of the trunke: now am I not reuenged well? haue I not had my penny worths? Yes villaine (quoth the Gentleman) and first the whore shal die: and with that drawing out his Rapier, hee would haue kild her: but the Proctor stayde him, and she protested she knew not how she came there, but thought shee had beene at home in her bed. Vpon this all the Schollers perswaded the gentleman, that Rowland did it by negromancie, and that if she were the honestest woman in the world, Magick were able to do as much: Rowland for very pittie affirmde it: and so they perswaded him, not to wade further in the matter for his owne credit, but to clappe it vp with silence. She wept and wrong her hands, and her father sate and shed teares: but at last by the perswasion of the Proctor and the other Schollers, Rowland and he for all this were made friends: his wife and hee agreed, as a man perswaded shee was faultlesse, and that it was done by Negromancie: and so all merrily went to the Tauerne and dranke, they going to the Colledge, and he to Cherryhinton, with full resolution neuer more to let his wife come to Cambridge: for feare of the Schollers Art Magick.

This tale made them all heartely laugh, euery one

commending the pollicie of the Scholler that had inuented so good a reuenge. The Cobler he marked all very diligently, and swore there was not a more sound historie for his turne, in all the *Legenda Aurea*: well it made all the Barge merrie, and seeing they were all in a dump they cryed who is next? mary that am I quoth the scholler, and he began to settle himselfe, whom I can best describe thus.

The description of the Scholler.

A Man he was of a sober look,
Giuen much vnto his booke:
For his visage was all pale,
As Clarkes tellen this tale,
That mickle study makes men leane
As well as doth a curst queane,
Appollo radiant and sheene,
His paterne long had beene:
For well skild was he
In verses and Poetrie.
In palmestrie he had some lore,
In other Artes mickle more,
Mickle could he say at each steuen,
Of the liberall Artes seuen,
Of the welken and the Axle-tree,
Whereon the heauens turnde mee:
Of Mercurie and Charles waine,
And of the Beares twaine:
Calisto and her sonne conueyed thither,
Which to Sea-men shew the weather:
When Neptunus with his mace,
Will make smile Amphitrites face.
Many other matters of Sophistrie,

Could

Could this Clarke in secrecie.
He could also speake of loue,
Of Paphos and of Venus doue.
And perhaps though he were a Clarke,
Yet he could skill in the darke,
As well as a man of lay degree,
To dally with a wench in priuitie.
His attire was all blacke,
But why do I longer clacke?
This clarke gan report
His storie in this sort.

The Schollers tale,

Containing the sundry misfortunes that two Sicilian Louers had, and how at the end their passionate sorrowes came to a pleasing successe.

WHen the King of Tunise was beaten out of his kingdome, and sought to enter againe by force. Iacomin Pierro, and Alexander Bartolo, two Noble men of Sicilia, and both of Palermo, for the good will they bare to the king, made certaine tall Barkes, and with their ayde maugure his enemies, placed the king againe safe in his kingdome: which done they returned againe to Palermo. This Iacomin Pierro had a sonne called also Iacomin, and this Alexander had a daughter called Katherine, these two being neighbours children, fell in loue together, insomuch, that Iacomin noting the beautie of Katherine, seeing with his eye her outward excellencie, and hearing with his eares her outward vertues and perfection entred with such deep insight into her qualities, that he resolued in himselfe, she and none but she should be the goddesse of his affections, & of the other side: Katherine feeding her eye with the desired obiect of

his person, and with delight pleasing her eare with the generall fame that ran through all Sicilia of his curtesie, affabilitie, and valour, determined that none but Iacomin should enioy the floure of her beauty. These two louers being in such a sympathy of agreeing passions, liued a long while with lookes, bashfull both to discouer the essence of their loues: yet at last Iacomin taking heart at grasse, finding one day fit place and opportunitie, discoursed vnto her, how euer since his yeares could entertaine any amorous thought, the Idea of her beautie and vertues remained imprinted in his heart so deeply, that none but she, could satisfie the end of his incessant desire: which was no other then the honest and honorable content of marriage. Katherine who was as willing as hee was desirous, told him that vpon that condition, whensoeuer their parents should agree, she was ready to be at his command. Thus they wooed and ended, and all in a short space, for that time parting with a kisse. This sweet consent of thoughts continued a long time betweene these two louers, insomuch that Iacomin resolued shortly to breake the matter to her father, to whom she knew the match would be most pleasing, for that old Iacomin and Alexander loued together as brothers.

Whiles thus these two louers held their demand in suspence, there fell a deadly iarre betweene the house of the Iacomins, and the family of the Bartolos: insomuch that not only all Palermo, but almost all Sicilia was in an vproare: for each toke armes against other, and being men of great parentage, friends tooke parts, and they began to bandy, that they fell to a flatte ciuil dissention. This disagreement betweene the parents, although it was a heart-breake to the two Louers, yet could it not at all disparage their affection, but the greater the mutinie, the deeper was the impression of their mindes. But by this meanes their meeting was hindred: yet loue being a priuy searcher of secrets, found them

them out a creuise betweene two walles, which parted their houses, and there oft times they mette and parlied hoping still some end would grow to this dismall dissention; but as the fire encreaseth with the winde, so this iarre grew greater by time, that the louers lost all hope euer to haue consent of parents: insomuch, that wholy in dispaire of an vnitie, they concluded to forsake Sicilia and to goe into Spaine, where they had both friendes, and there to remaine till their families were accorded. Vpon this resolution, Iacomine prouideth him a barke, and laide it ready in the hauen, and when the wind and weather was faire, gaue a watch-word to Katherine, and so got her a bord, hoised sailes, and away they made towards Spaine: they were not long gone, but they were misled, and by all possible coniectures knowne to be slipt away together, for diuerse manifest instances were reported of their loues. The fathers fell both into deepe passions, Iacomine hauing but one sonne, and Bartolo but one daughter: yea the griefe of their vnkind departure, did so worke in their fathers mindes, that each intended more mischefe to other, as it were in reuenge, that the broils grew hotter. But as they dissented, so these two louers accorded euery way, looking for no other hauen but the coast of Spaine: but Fortune that delights to sport her selfe in the variable accidents of loue, brought it thus to passe. They had not sailed three dayes from Sicilia, but that there fell a great calme, and certaine gallies that were Rouers vnder the king of Tmisa, espied this Sicilian ship: and thinking to haue some rich prize, made out, and gaue onset, commanding them to yeeld; the Sicilians being calme, could not make way from them, but yet although too weake, stoutly denied to be boarded, and fought it out to the vttermost, chiefely Iacomine, who was sore wounded: but at last, they of the Gallies entred, and bestowed the Mariners vnder hatches; and then went to rifle the ship,, where

they found Katherine all blubbered with teares, & almost dead for feare, her they take for all her pittifull shrikes and cries, conueyed her into the gallies: which Iacomin seeing, take so heauily, that he was ready to dye for greefe, but so sore he was hurt, that stir he could not, but was faine to suffer her to be carried away, whither the mercie of the slaues pleased to transport her: when they had rifled the shippe and found nothing but passengers, away they went with faire Katherine, determining with themselues to giue her for a present to the king of Tunise whom they knew did loue a faire woman, more than halfe his kingdome, and so faire a creature as Katherine they were sure he neuer saw before. Upon this they made saile towards Tunise, and when they were arriued the captaine of the gallies, causing her to dresse her in her richest attire, went with her to the kings place, where when he was admitted to his highnesse presence, humbly on his knees he craued pardon, as one that contrarie to his maiesties lawes had bin a Rouer and a pyrate on the seas: but now loathing that course of life, was come to submit himselfe and hauing taken that gentlewoman as a prize at sea, desired his Maiestie to accept her as a present. The king whiles the pirate told his tale, kept his eie still on the gentlewoman, whose beautie he found such, that he thought her some heauenly creature shrowded in some mortall carcas. The king not onely thanked the pyrate for his present, but gaue him free pardon, and a letter of mart, with many other rich giftes, so that hee returned richly rewarded. and then turning him to Katherine, he take her in his armes, kist her, and gaue her such entertainment as in all royaltie he could. But nothing could make her cease off from teares, hauing still her Iacomin in remembrance, whom she held for dead: which the king perceiuing, commanded that she should be carried to a place of his, standing fast by the Cittie wall, and there placed and attended vppon with all diligence,

gence, vntil she might be comforted, and thither when it pleased him he would haue recourse. Seated in that house, there she led a solitarie life, washing her cheekes euery day with teares for her poore Iacomin, who likewise wounded as he was, was brought to Tunise, and there left in the Surgeons hand, where he was healed: Allone as he might well goe, he went as a man forlorne vppe and downe the Cittie, looking euery where if he might see his Katherine: whereupon he resolued to passe from place to place, and so to end his dayes in trauell, if he did not by narrow inquisition finde her out: getting therefore his bag and baggage in a readinesse, he was going out of Tunise: and as he passed out at the gates, he cast his eye vp to the house where Katherine was, who at that time was looking out of a casement, he espied her, and thinking it should be she stood in a maze. Katherine seeing him, and thinking him to be her Iacomin, was almost ready to fall downe in a swound: thus stood the two Louers at gaze, at last Iacomin called Katherine: Iacomin (quoth shee) and with that she clapt her finger on her mouth and made a signe, that for that time hee should depart. Backe againe went Iacomin to his Hostelle, as merry a man as might be, & there staid till it was something late in the euening, and then going to the place, sought round about the house, and there found a backe window into a garden, where they might conueniently talke: hee had not staied there long, but Katherine came to the window, and there after a volly of sighes, quencht with teares, they began to discourse their fortunes since their departure. Katherine tolde vnto Iacomin how shee was giuen by the Pyrates to th. King for a present, and how he had placed her there reseruing her for one of his concubines, and that shee looked euery houre, when hee should come to deflowre her. Therefore (quoth shee) since we are man and wife, and as we haue liued together, euen so let vs die together, and enioy thou the

chastitie

chastitie of that body, whose soule hath béeneuer thine in all amitie: I respect not the King, nor what his tortures can doe, therefore at night come hither to this place when it is darke, climbe vp on the wall, and so on this trée, and thou maiest easily come into the casement, which for the same purpose thou shalt find open. At this motion Iacomin was glad, and so departed, and at the time appointed came: and being made more nimble by loue and desire, he lept vp the wall lightly, and so into the trée, and from thence into the casement, where hée found his Katherine ready to receiue him, banquet him she could not, least any might heare, but least he did with kisses, or whatsoeuer shee might afford to his amorous desires, so that in the end, to bed they went, and there with pleasure recompenced their former misfortunes.

Loue hauing thus aduanced her Champion: Fortune enuying their happinesse, meant to haue one fling more at them, and brought it so to passe, that the King that night resolued to haue the company of Katherine, and therefore after all his Lords were at rest, tooke with him his Chamberlaine, and certaine of his Guard, and went to the place where she lay: comming in by a backe gate hauing keyes for euery doore, at last opened the Chamber where she was, and there drawing the curtaine to behold his goddesse, he saw where she lay with a youngman in her armes fast a sléepe: the King for anger was ready to haue kild them, but yet he did qualifie his furie with a royall patience: and called his Chamberlaine, and the rest of the Guard, and shewed them this sight, demanding of them if any of them knew the yong man: they all answered, no: but supposed he was some stranger. The King straight commanded, that certaine of his Guard should watch them, and assoone as they awakte, carrie them to prison, and let there in the midst of the market place be erected a greate stake, and in the afternoone, there let them both be consumed with fire: the

Guard

Guard obeied the Kings commandement, & he went his way in great choller, and highly discontented. The King departed, these Louers slept swetly till the morning and then they awoke, where presently they heard a rustling of men, that straight told them how the king was there, what had happened, and what he had commanded: therefore they made them rise and then bound them and carried them away. The two Louers were a whit dismayed at this newes, but embracing and kissing each other, comforted themselues in this, that they should as they liued together so die together, & that their soules nor bodies should neuer part. Straight were they carried to prison and the stake was a prouiding, whereupon the rumour of their burning came about the Cittie, that against the houre appointed all the Cittie were gathered together, and forth at last was Iacomine and Katherine brought, and bound to the stake backe to backe: They earnestly desired that they might be bound face to face, but it could not be granted which grieued them: but they comforted themselues with cheerful words, resolued to suffer death with patience. All the Cittie was gathered together, & stood gazing on them, and pitying them that so sweet a couple should fall in such fatall extremitie: the poore soules ashamed, and hanging downe their heades, expecting euery minute the beginning of their martyrdome: As thus the fire was ready to be brought, came the Lord high Admirall of Tunise by, and seing such a concourse, demanded the cause: The people tolde him as much as they knew. He on his foot-cloth came to the stake, and loking vpon them seing them so louely, asked of them, of what Country they were? Of Sicilia sir quoth Iacomin. With that the Admirall staring him earnestly in his face, called to his remembrance the fauour of old Iacomin his father. Of what place in Sycilia, my friend quoth he? of Palermo: thy name quoth the Admirall? Iacomin quoth he: Why thou art not (answered the Lord) the sonne of Iacomin Pierro? yes quoth he: and

this the daughter of Alexander Bartolo: And if (quoth Iacomine) you knew these families, do but so much for vs as speake to the King that we may be bound face to face, & so die, for life, that we hold in scorne. Although the tormentors were appointed to dispatch thē by an houre, yet the L. Admiral charged them not to put any fire to the wood till his returne; which they promist, & away gallops the Admiral as a mad man through the streets to the kings palace, where whē he came, he found the king in a great rage discoursing to his lords the villany of Katherin, that admitted a stranger into her. The Admirall without any great reuerence (as a man full of choller) began thus roughly and briefely. Can they which place kings pull downe kings? then looke thou once againe to be beaten out of Tunise: did Iacomine Pierro, & Alexander Bartolo, the two valliant Lords of Sicilia, by their force seat thē in thy kingdome? and now in reuenge doest thou burne the onely issue of them both: for that two Louers seeke the fruition of their Loues, so shall we haue Sicilia our enemies, and thou seeke a new kingdome. What meanest thou to vse these railing speeches? quoth the King: mary quoth the Admiral, yonder yong gentleman that is at the stake is the son of Iacomin, and she the daughter of Bartolo. At this the king stood in an amaze, & was halfe afraid, so that he cryed out to his lords, that they should run and bring ỹ couple as they were to him which they performed with all diligence. When Iacomine and Katherine saw the nobles come, then they lookt for fire: but when they heard how they must be vnlosed, and how courteously they were intreated, hope of better fortune gaue them some comfort. Well. away they were carryed to the king, who gratiously entertaining them, demanded the cause of their bould enterprise, and what fortune brought them into such a farre country. Iacomine straight began and discourst their particular hap, and what accidents they had, whose sonnes they were, and what was their contrary fortunes. The king at this

embraced

embraced them both, welcomd them, and craued pardon of his rash censure, cladding them in royal apparrell, and enriching them with many costly giftes, after solemnely marryed them in Tunise, and kept a great feast with turney and triumphes fitting their degrées, and after preparing a prettie fléete, sent them home to their parents by the Lord Admirall, whose arriuall in Palermo was wonderfull strange, in that all thought they were dead. But when they recounted to their parents their misfortunes, and lastly, the gracious fauours of the king of Tunise, by the help and good perswasion of the Lord Admirall: the instance of their true loue reconciled their fathers and families, not onely the two louers agréed, but the two houses euer after continued in peace and concord.

Assoone as the Scholler had tolde his tale, euery man thankt him for his paines, and sayd it was a pleasant and a delightfull history: amongst the rest there was an olde woman, who for very kindnesse to heare of their hard haps, and the good fortunes of the louers, wept: why weepe you mother quoth the Cobler? by my troth sonne quoth shée, to thinke on the chaunces of loue which are so variable, and by the grace of God if all in the Barge will giue me leaue, you shall heare an old woman tell a tale that will make you all merry. Euery man desired her to say on, and shee being a simple woman, as you shall perceiue by her description, setled her selfe to talke thus.

The description of the old woman.

CRooked was this beldame for age,
Huffe shouldred and of a wrinckled visage,

And as her backe and necke was crooked,
So was her noſe long and hooked.
Many furrowes in her brow,
Hairy and briſtled like a Sow
She had a large tawny face,
And therein an ill fauoured grace.
She was mouthed like a ſparrow,
Gated like a wheele-barrow,
And of a long time beforne,
Not a tooth in her head had ſhe borne.
Yet could ſhe chew good Ale
For her noſe was nothing pale,
But with ſwinking at her will,
She looked red about the gill:
Mickle talke ſhe had and Mickle chat
When with her Goſſeps ſhe ſat
That threeſcore yeeres before,
The bell for Goſſiping ſhe bore.
Her apparrell was after the elder beere,
Her caſſocke aged ſome fiftie yeere.
Gray it was and long beforne,
The wooll from the threedes it was worne.
A thrumbe hat ſhe had of red,
Like a buſhell on her head.
Her kercher hung from vnder her cap,
With a taile like a flie flap.
And tyed it faſt with a whim wham,
Knit vp againe with a trim tram,
Much like an Ægiptian,
Her ſleeues blew, her traine behind,
With ſiluer hookes was tucked I find,
Her ſhooes broade and forked before:
No ſuch I ſaw of yore.
This beldame on her merrie pin.
Began her tale with this gin.

The old wiues tale

Containing the wily ſleights of a wanton wife, and how both cunningly and craftily to the ſafegard of her owne honeſtie, and her husbands diſcredit, ſhe ſhifted her louer.

IN a farre Country there dwelled ſometime a Gentleman of good parentage, called Signior Mizaldo, who had to his wife a very faire and beautifull Gentlewoman. And as the beaſtes moſt grédily gaze at the Panthers ſkin, and the birds at the Peacocks plumes: ſo euery faire feminine face is an adamant to draw ẏ obiect of mens eyes to behold the beauties of women: experience proued it true in the wife of Mizaldo: for ſhe béing a woman of ſingular perfection and proportion, was generally looked on and liked of all, but fauoured and loued eſpecially of a young Gentleman called Peter, dealing with ſuch ſecrecie, that they continually ſatiſfied their deſires without giuing Signior Mizaldo the leaſt occaſion of ſuſpition: and the meanes that they performed it with ſuch ſecrecie was this. Euery weéke twiſe her huſband rid from home about certaine his affaires, and ſhe very artificially neare to the high way, that leads to the towne where Peter lay, had placed an Aſſes head vpon a trée, and when her huſband was gone forth, ſhe turned the head towards the towne, but when he was at home, then ſhe alwaies had it loking to her owne houſe: vſing herein (as ſome thought) an Embleame, ſaying when ſhe turned the Aſſes head forth, that the Aſſe her Huſband with the long horning eares was gone from home, and when it ſtood towards the houſe, that the Aſſe kept his chamber: but whatſoeuer in this her conceite was, Peter alwaies knew when to come, and euer when Myzaldo was from home reſorted to his houſe. Now it chaunced that certaine boyes comming by, and ſéeing the Aſſes head ſtand there, threw ſtones

at it, & hit it so often that at last they turned the asses head towardes the town: which Peter walking abroad & spying thought that Mizaldo had bin gone from home & therfore at night walked towards the louers house, & comming to the dore finding it shut, according to his accustomed maner knockt, the good wife awakt: heard him & was sore afraid that her husband should heare him, & so lay still: by and by he knockt againe more lowde: Mizaldo awoke, hearing this, asked his wife who it was that rapt at the dore, or what that knocking meant? Oh husband quoth she be still it is a foule spirit that haunts this house, & yet hitherto we neuer durst reueale it, and it hath, thankes be to God, bin your good fortune neuer to heare it before Mizaldo richer farre then he was wise: beléeued his wife, and askt her if it had done any harme, no quoth she for I had learnd a charm to send it hence: Frier Rowlād learnd it me: & if it knocke againe you & I will go downe together: & I will say my charm & so we shall liue at rest, Peter that thought some other friend had bin with his leman: taking it in scorn that her husband as he thought being from home he should not be let in knockt again amain. With that Mizaldo & his wife arose, lighted a candle and went downe to the dore where Peter was: then she wisht her husband to knéele downe vpon his knées while she said the charme: with that she began thus.

Spirit spirit get thee hence,
For here is no residence:
Here thou maist not be:
This night to trouble me:
For my husband and I
Safe in our beds must lie.
Therefore from hence go,
And trouble me no mo.

Now husband quoth she, spit: & with that he spit: and Peter laught heartily and wisht hee might spitte out his teeth for being at home: This charme said she thrice o-

ner

uer, & euery time made him spit, that Peter might bee assuredly perswaded that her husband was at home. Upon this Mizaldo and his wife went to bed, and heard the spirit no more: for Peter went laughing home to his lodging. Mizaldo could not sléep this night nor many nights after but still marueling what this spirit should be, lay awake. Peter ý once or twice thus was deceiued of the asse head, because by som cõtrary mishap it was turnd, deuised thus ý euery night whẽ Mizaldos wife wẽt to bed she shold ty a string to her toe, & then leaue the end of it at the doore, so that when Peter came he might wake her, & thẽ if she puld ý string again & tied it fast, her husbãd was from home: if she let it slip, then he was in bed. Thus by the meanes of this string Mizaldo was oft made cuckold, & sometimes whẽ her husbãd was at home & in his sound sléep, if Peter puld the string she wold rise & go down to him to ý doore. At last so thus this game continued, that Mizaldos wife being fast a sléep, & he rising to find the chamberpot stumbled vpon the string, & wondring what it ment or to what end, groped easily, & found it tied to his wiues toe, & from thence reacht to ý doore, he as simple as he was coniectured that this was done to make him cuckold, & therefore for that night said nothing: but against the next night had prouided a great Partizan by his bed side: and when his wife was fast a sléep he vntyed the string, & tied it to his owne toe: he had not slumbred a little, but hee felt the string pull easily, whereupon he puld againe, and then Peter thought assuredly that he was gone from home, whereupon he knockt. Then did Mizaldo, rise, put on his clothes, and tooke the partizan in his hand, and downe hée went rustling that his wife wakt, & hearing him go downe so easily, felt for the string that was at her toe, & mist it, whereupon she perceiued her husband had found out the deceit, & whipping out of the bed, ran downe the staires: with that Mizaldo opened the doore & thought to haue taken Peter, but he hauing a glance of him, being in a darke night came away, & Mizaldo after him & raised

the

the watch yet was Peter so light of foot that he outran thē all, & escapt. Mizaldos wife fearing the worst ran vp again to her maid, & wild her to go to her bed, & lie there, & to abide whatsoeuer her husband should do to her, & she wold giue her a new gowne & a new petticote: the wench was content, & went to her maisters bed, scarce was she warm there, but vp came Mizaldo in a great rage, & straight laying down his partizan, fell to beating of his wife, & with a whipcord al to lasht her body, that the blod ran down the sheets, and when he had done, in the dark groped, & found a paire of sheares & clipt of all the haire of her head, & that done opened the doore & went his way. The wench almost kild with blowes & sore pained with smart, lay still as one in a trance: but as soon as euer Mizaldo was gone his wife arose, & shut the doore, and came to the wench, where she comforted & washt her, & anoynted her, putting on cleane linnen vpon her, & laid cleane sheets on the bed, and so sate down discōtented at her worke: no sooner did ỳ day breake but signior Mizaldo went with all speed to his mother in law and there reuealed to her & to his wiues brethren, how his wife had dealt with him & how he had reuenged her: yet not sufficiently, but was fully resolued to bring her this day before the magistrate, & so absolutly to make a diuorce, the mother fell a weeping, & knowing her owne fault when she was young intreated her sonnes ỳ they would make a peace & attonement betweene their sister & her husband, they fell to exclaime against her, & said seeing she was by her lightnes ỳ discredit of her house they wold be the first & the formost in punishing such grosse offences. Vpon this they went home with Mizaldo to his house, & there comming vp the staires, they found their sister sitting very sad, the husband frouned, & brethren scolded: but the mother whom nature more nerely toucht said, what cheer daughter? what stir is this betwēn your husband & you? what stir quoth her daughter? mary I would you & my brethrē had gon to my burying whē you went to my marriage, to wed me to a drunkard that all day goes out

about

about whores and curtezans, & at night comes home late, and perhaps not all night, as he hath done now, & so do I sit all day comforties, & lie in the night like a widow while he is abroad with his strumpets. And quoth the mother, he is this morning come to your brethren & me, with an outcry against you, ỹ this night he toke you with a lemmon at the doore, & how he found it out by a string tied to your toe. Fie on him drunkard (quoth she) these are his dreames when he lies tipled in the tauerne: but I maruel where he hath bin to night: Mary dame said he, I fear me your flesh & your bones know too wel, for I thinke you haue not one free spot on your body, I so whipt you for your whordom, & I think ỹ sheets in the bed can witnes, & the haire I cut off your head can testifie. Now mother (quoth she) & good brethren, see whether this be an arrant drunkard, or not, ỹ tel these fables, saying he beate me so this night, when he toucht me not, nor before this time since yesterday, came within these doores: where he saies, the sheets are bloody, see brethren, see, they are cleane: for my skin, take view of it, if it be any way toucht: and for my haire, see how faire & long it is: how hath he thē done these pranks: alas alas, he hath falne amongst his whores in his drunkennes, & hath bled them so, & now to the slander of me, to the dishonor of my friends, & the perpetuall infamy of our house, he hath thus (without cause) reuiled me, where ye see his own lying tōg cōdemnes him, Mizaldo seeing neither his wifes hair cut, nor her body any way bruised, fel into a great dump, wōdring whether he dreampt it, or no, insomuch, ỹ at last he askt: why wife, was I not this night at home? At home in faith sir no, but with some of your drabs, and I think you came home drunk. At this doubtful demand, her brethren began to take her part, and seeing what he said, was false, & all her speeches probable, they rayled on him in most bitter termes, and told him, in that he had maried their sister who was an honest woman, & by all meanes sought to depriue her of her good name (without cause) who shold be ỹ prote-

protector of her honor, they would not put it vp vnreuenged, but would to the vttermost do to him what iniury & extremity of the law would afford. Vpon this, the man seing how in all things his wife had disproued him, thought assuredly that he was not at home the last night, & therefore desired her to pardon him, and he would neuer after be taken in the like offence, & so vpon that, by her mother and her brethren they were made friends, and euer after Peter and she with lesse suspition enioyed their loues.

The old wife hauing told her tale, euery man began to commend the wit of the woman, who on the sudden is euer most quick & pearcing, able so sone to yeld a peremptorie excuse, as the occasion is ministred. By that they had told this tale, they were within sight of Grauesend: wherupon they thought to haue giuen ouer, but that a Sonner sate by, who was a pleasant fellow, and he began thus. Gentlemen seeing at the motion of the Cobler, wee haue imitated old Father Chaucer, hauing in our little Barge, as he had in his trauell sundry tales, and amongst the rest the old wiues Tale, that you shall not want the merriest knaue of all, the Somners, you shall heare what I can say, and to keepe decorum, as the Cobler began with the tale of the Prior, I will end with one of the Abbot: they all thanckt him hartily, & he began thus, But first I must as hitherto I haue done all, describe him.

The description of the Somner.

THis Somner was not very old,
Of a countenance stout and bold,
That would against the truth wage,
For he had a shameleſſe visage:
Squint eyde was he, and his head
Was bad hued, bloud red:
A nose he had that gan show
What liquor he loued I trow.
For he had before long seuen yeare,

Beene

Beene of the towne the Ale conner,
His face was full of pretious ſtone
Richer in Inde was neuer none:
For Rubie, Pearle, and Cryſolite,
With them all his face was dight,
From the brow to the very chin,
Yet to drinke he would nere lin:
But ſwinked with all his might,
At euery houſe where he did ſit.
His conditions were faire and good,
For why he was by the roode
Acquainted with rich and eke with poore,
And kend well euery kerne whoore,
Or other wife that held no ſcorne,
To make her husband were the horne,
Such a knaue he was indeed
That as true as my creed,
He cited euery woman to the law,
Euen for the valew of a ſtraw,
And ſommon them to appeare,
At the bawdy Court as I leere,
Where for money the Sumner,
Would all their faults cleere,
That they ſhould not appeare at all,
Before the officiall,
A bawde he was, a tel-tale, and a knaue,
Like another it is ſeld to haue,
Vnleſſe a man ſhould hell rake,
There to finde out his make,
Yet can he thus declare,
How the Abbot of Wickham did fare.

The Sumners Tale.

Containing the ſhiftes that the Abbot made to haue his Loue, and how he raiſed a man from death.

In Wickam there was an Abbot that was a man of a middle

middle age, lusty and frolike, & coueted to acquaint himself with all the faire wiues in the towne, insomuch that euery man doubted of this iolly Clarke: yet he made himself holy, but do what he could it might not clær the suspition that the men of the towne had of him: Amongst the rest, he was acquainted with a Farmers wife, that was none of the wisest, & yet she had wit enough to beware of the Abbot. this Farmer exceeded all the rest, not only of the towne but of all the whole country about for iealousie, being so suspitious of his wife, that he would brook none of his neighbors to come into his house, and if she glaunced her lookes neuer so litle awry he would strait beate her while he could stand ouer her, insomuch that the woman was weary of her life, and looked as a creature forlorne.

As she was one day walking in the fields to do her businesse, the Abbot met her, who toke her by the hand, and began to make loue to her; she was both coy and fearfull: yet at last ỳ Abbot gan to prattle, that she began to tel him how iealous her husband was, & how weary she was of her life. Tush (quoth the Abbot) care not for that, referre that matter to me. I will strait cure him of his iealousie, if thou wilt be my paramour. So sore was the poore woman troubled with a iealous foole, that she was glad to graunt whatsoeuer the Abbot wold aske, so her husband might be mended of his fault: Make some excuse (quoth the Abbot) send him to me to morrow, and then let me alone: but whatsoeuer thou heares is befallen him, feare not, all shall be well. Vpon that the Farmers wife and the Abbot parted, she vnto her house, he to his cloister, where he called one of the Monks, in whom he did repose all his trust, and reuealed vnto him the whole matter, and what plot he had laide to bring his purpose to passe: The Monke condescended to do whatsoeuer the Abbot should command, and so vpon this resolution they laughed: and the next day came the Farmer to the Abbot to haue an hie Masse said for one of his children that was sick: the Abbot made much of him, & bade him to

dinner,

dinner, & subtilly at the last draught conueied a dormatiue potion into the cup, that presently after dinner he fell into a deadly sleepe, that his senses being gone, all men thought hée was dead: wherefore presently one of the Monkes ran to the good wife and told her what had happned to her husband she cried out and wrong her hands and told it to her neighbors: whereupon she and a great company both of men and women went to the Abbey, and there was he knit vp in his winding sheet, the wife pittifully lamented, and the neighbors comforted her: the Abbot saied he should be buried in their Abbey because he dyed there, and therefore in presence of them all solemnely buried him, which done, his wife like a sorrowfull woman departed home to her house with her neighbors.

Assoone as night came, the Abbot and the Monke (whome he had made priuy to his practise) went and cunningly tooke him out of his graue, and carried him into a deep dungeon, where he could se no light, and there let him lie starke naked till such time as the potion had ended the operation & that he should wake. At length the Farmer awoke & stretching himselfe, finding that he was naked, and in a place lothsome, darke & fearefull, he cold not tell what to thinke, but blest himselfe, & said, Lord haue mercy vpon me, where am I? The Monke that was by, attired like a spirite thou art dead and in purgatory. Dead? quoth the Farmer: can dead men speake? Yea quoth the Monk, & eate such meat & drinke as is appointed for the dead: This day in the morning thou didst die, & thy wife did burie thée in the Abbey, accompanied with all her neighbours: and I wretch a spirit of purgatory am appointed to torment thée without ceasing, for that in thy life time thou wert iealous, and didst misuse thy wife without cause, therefore I am appointed to vexe thée three score and ten yéeres without ceasing, and with that, hauing a whip in his hande, the Monke laide it on, and gaue him many a shrewd blow: At last he left him and went his way, and told the Abbot what he had done.

The Abbot as soone as conuenient leysure wold serue, stole secretly to the Farmers house, and there got to bed to the good wife and euery night lay with her while her husband was in purgatorie: and euery day the Monke went downe & allowed him a little pittance of meat and drinke: but whipt him most miserably. At last the Farmer grew to be maruelous penitent and repentant for his faults, swearing that if he were aliue againe, he wold neuer be iealous nor suspitious: earnestly praying his wife that she would forgiue him. While thus the poore Farmer was in his purgatory almost whipt to death, & famisht, the Abbot and his wife liued in all pleasure and iollity, laughing when they heard the Monk report what the poore man said in his purgatory: At last she perceiued ý she was with child, & therfore they must nèds haue a father for it, wherupō they deuised to haue him out of purgatory, & to bring him home, with a miracle. The next day ý Monk came to him according to his accustomed manner, & whipt him not, but told him that his wife euery day offred a Taper for him & said so many good praiers, that his sins were remitted, and his punishment forgiuen, wherupon he thanked his wife, and made a vow if God shold restore him to life (as it was impossible) he wold not only leaue to be iealous himselfe, but warne all other men to take hæde of the like fault. Thus continued he without whipping by the space of fiue or six dayes, and at last the Monke, in stead of drinke, gaue him an other dormatiue potion so that he fell a sleepe.

Then the Abbot and the Monke in the night conueyed him into a place where he was buried, and so lett him lye. About the houre when he knewe he would wake, was the Monke there fayning himselfe at prayer: and assone as euer he saw him stir, he ran away, and cryed out, vpon this all the Monkes of the Cloyster rose, & askt what the matter was. O quoth he as I was in prayer by the Farmers graue I heard a tumbling & a voyce there either of him or of a spirit, with that the Monkes went downe & found ý there was one aliue within the Tombe: then they

called

called the Abbot and told him, who slipping on his night gowne, ran apace to see the miracle: when he came there, & they were all gathered together, they lifted vp the stone, & there lay he tumbling in his sheet: so they toke him out & vndid him, and he looked wan and gash, but spake to them and told them, that the Lord at the prayers of his wife had restored him to life, and that he had beene in purgatory, & what punishment he had abidden for his iealousie. The Monks were proud of this miracle, and knew that their Abbey should be more famous for this strange wonder, & straight sent for his wife & his neighbours: who whē they came, first the Abbot reuealed vnto them, how that he & his Monks hearing the continuall plaints & prayers the poore widow made for her husbād: he did likewise w̄ earnest Orisons intreate of God, that if it were his will, hee would shew a miracle on him, & restore him to life: & now my maisters & friends quoth he, see the difference betweene the prayers of an Abbot, and the prayers of a lay man: for follow me, and you shall see what effect they haue taken. With that he caried them into the parlor where the Farmer was, assone as they saw him, they were all amazed, and his wife fell downe in a sound: whereupon reuiuing her, he began to say, feare not wife, nor you gentle neighbors, and doubt not of me, for I am by this holy man and my wifes prayers, restored to life, hauing beene in that most vile place of purgatory, where there is nothing but darknesse and diuels: there was I tormented for all my sinnes, but especially for my iealousie, being euery day punisht till my wifes prayers releaued me: many a fable beside of his owne inuention did he tell them that he had seene in purgatory. At last as he was thus talking, his wife fell about his neck and kist him, and wept for ioy, & all the neighbors reioyced and did reuerence to the Abbot for his holines. Upon this he and the rest of the Mōks caried him home to his house solemnly with a procession, and there left him. This newes of a man restored to his life againe by the Abbot of Wickam, spread through the

whole

whole cuntry, yᵗ al men had in admiratiō, as a man passing holy & vertuous, and diuerse came to sée the Farmer from farre, all which he did certifie what he had séene in purgatory, what great punishment for sundry sinnes, but especially for iealousie. Thus he not onely exhorted all men from suspition of their wiues, but euer after gaue his wife such libertie, that she might at her owne pleasure be familiar with the Abbot.

The Sumner hauing told his tale, the people commended the great deuotion of the Abbot, wishing all iealous fooles to passe the like purgatorie. The Cobler he commended all, and said, that they were now welcome to Grauel-end: euery man to his purse and lookt in it for his two pence to pay his fare: and when they had done, they rose and went into the towne to drinke: and because they went most of them to Canterburie, they went all to one Inne, where they began to descant and discourse of the tales that had past: I can (quoth the Cobler) remember them all, and very néere verbatim collect and gather them together: which by the grace of God gentlemen, I meane to do, and then to set them out in a pamphlet vnder mine owne name, as an inuectiue against Tarltons newes out of Purgatorie: and then if you please to send to the Printer, I wil leaue a token, that euery one of you that told a tale, shall haue a booke for his labor. In the meane time, till I haue perfected it, ile lay my Coblers stoole aside, and my selfe become an Author, and I hope you shall find me so sufficient in mine english, that if I should study, you wold report, I might for my paine, match Lilly, Greene, or any other in excellency of prose: at this they all laught, payd their shot, and went with the merie Cobler towards Canterburie.

FINIS.

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